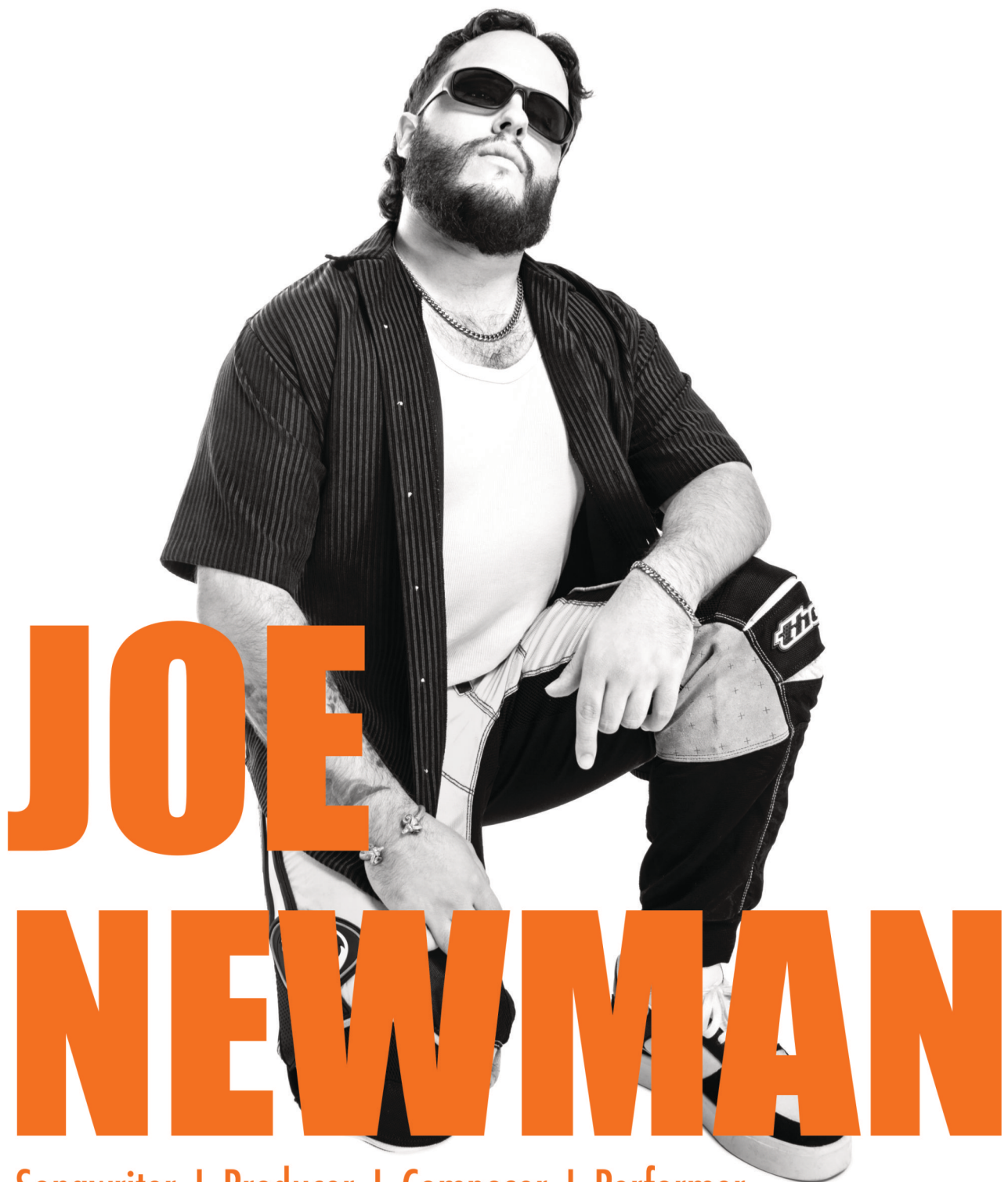




Songwriter | Producer | Composer | Performer

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I've never really separated songwriting, production, or composition - to me, It's all the same process. Different ways of shaping the same thing:

*Emotion.
Movement.
Atmosphere.*

Sometimes that becomes a song, sometimes a soundscape, sometimes something in between.

The goal is always the same - make something you don't just hear, but feel.

”



COMPOSER

I write music for worlds, not just songs. For screen, stage, and artist.

But where did that come from?

It wasn't the dialogue that stayed with me - it was the music

When did music stop feeling like songs, and start feeling like worlds?

Honestly, I don't remember a moment where it began - it's just always been there. **I was a film kid long before I was a band kid.** Action, adventure, sci-fi... those were the worlds I lived in. And even back then, it wasn't the dialogue that stayed with me, it was the music. I'd rewatch scenes not so much for the story, but for the way the score and the visuals collided, creating something bigger than either of them on their own.

It's why I still defend the Star Wars prequels. Yes, the dialogue can be pretty awful at times, but the music carries everything underneath it. *Battle of the Heroes* holds the tragedy of *Revenge of the Sith*, *Across the Stars* captures the complications of forbidden love in *Attack of the Clones*, and *Duel of the Fates* drives the urgency of *The Phantom Menace*. Those moments stayed with me because of how they felt. They taught me everything I needed to know: **a great composition carries more subtext than words ever could.**

What early influences pulled you toward more expansive or cinematic writing?

Before I ever picked up a guitar, I was already responding to orchestras and huge harmonic swells - I just didn't know what they were called. James Horner, Hans Zimmer, Randy

Edelman... they were the background to my childhood. I didn't sit there analysing them - or even know their names, then - I just knew that **something about those sounds made my chest tighten** in the best way.

When I started playing in bands, I actually tried to push that part of myself down. I thought everything had to be heavier, riff-driven, simpler. But no matter what I wrote, there were always these influences creeping in, these interweaving melodic lines that wanted to stretch further than the standard "four chord" format. For years that frustrated me - it felt like I wasn't doing "the band thing" properly. Eventually I realised that wasn't a flaw, it was just who I was.

Discovering artists who weren't afraid to blend pop writing with cinematic weight gave me permission to lean into it. **Once I stopped fighting my instincts, composing became a lot more honest.**

Big isn't about volume - it's about gravity

How do you approach emotion when working with larger textures and arrangements?

There's a technical side to it, of course. Understanding harmony helps. Different modes carry different emotional colours, certain intervals create tension or release almost instinctively. **If you know what a scene needs, you can usually guide yourself toward that space quite quickly.**

But most of the time, it's less scientific than that. I'll picture a scene - sometimes literally, sometimes just something in my head - and I'll sit at the keys or the guitar and let my hands wander until something sticks.

When it clicks, you feel it. The room changes slightly. That's when you know you've found the emotional centre.

How do you balance intensity and restraint so the music still feels human?

Contrast. Always contrast. **Big only works because small exists next to it.** You can build tension with layers of strings, brass, percussion all colliding in an action sequence - or you can build the same tension with a single uneasy texture that barely moves.

There are times when I'll stack twenty or thirty elements onto one melody because I want it to feel monumental, like the ground is shifting. Other times it's one piano note hanging in a long reverb tail that says more than an orchestra ever could. **The trick is remembering that music isn't competing with the image - it's serving it,** the same as in songwriting.

It has to reflect what's happening in the character's eyes, in the lighting of the scene, in the world they're standing in.

What kinds of stories, images, or environments do you imagine your music living in?

I naturally lean toward darker, futuristic spaces - sci-fi, action, that slightly dystopian edge. I love sound design and synthesisers, and there's something about **blending orchestral weight with synthetic textures** that just feels like home to me. Games like

Mass Effect or *Halo* tap into that palette beautifully - tense, expansive, slightly otherworldly.

But there's another side to me too. One of the films I've returned to most in my life is *Titanic*, and again, it was the score that kept pulling me back. So even when I'm writing something heavy or futuristic, there's usually a melodic core underneath it - **something human and vulnerable holding everything together.**

How has your idea of "big" music changed over time?

When I was younger, "big" meant as much as possible - more layers, more counterpoint, more everything, as long as it didn't collapse. There's still a thrill in that.

These days, I think of "big" as gravity. It could be fifty layers working together to create one enormous BRAAAM, a single kick drum that lands so perfectly it feels architectural, or it could be a glassy piano note floating in space. **What makes something big isn't volume - it's emotional weight.** It's whether it moves something in you.

And that's really the whole point of composing, for me. **To move something. Even if nobody can quite explain why.**







PRODUCER

**A good record isn't just written.
It's built.**

*Every decision either serves the feeling,
or it's in the way.*

Density doesn't scare me. Lack of intention does

What first drew you toward producing, rather than focusing solely on performing or writing?

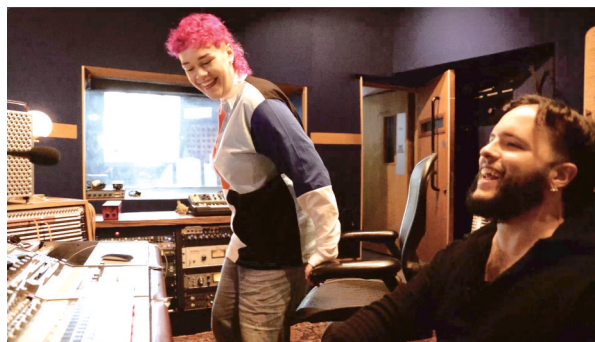
From as early as I can remember, I've always listened to music from the inside out. Whether on long car journeys as a kid or walking home at night, I'd instinctively start pulling songs apart as they played - listening past the surface to find the layers underneath. **I was fascinated by how small, nuanced choices add up to something you can physically feel.**

That curiosity extended to instruments too. Learning guitar, bass, drums, keys - I wanted to understand not just how they were played, but what role they served emotionally. From there, learning to record and produce felt like the natural next step. It was the only way to properly hear what was happening in my head. **At some point, it stopped being about playing parts and became about shaping the whole picture.**

When you open a session for the first time, what are you listening for before you touch anything?

Focal points. **I want to know where the energy is living in each section.** In popular music that's often the vocal, but not always. Sometimes it's an ambient guitar part in the first verse, a tom-led groove in the second, or a synth or string motif that needs to surface between lines. I'll make quick mental notes - what's working, what isn't, what feels like it

wants more space - and address the big picture early. **I try not to get lost in details before I understand what the song is actually asking for,** and you can only do that by figuring out what really matters.



Your productions can be dense but still feel clear - how do you think about balance without losing energy?

It comes back to focal points again, and film scoring is a great reference for this. One moment the strings lead, the next it's brass or percussion. You're constantly guiding attention. I approach my songs and productions in the same way, mixing and balancing section by section rather than chasing a single static hierarchy. **Density doesn't scare me. Lack of intention does.**

Sometimes that means stripping things back. Other times it means letting everything exist at once and managing the conflict. If multiple low-end elements need to coexist, I'll decide which one matters most in that moment and automate space around it - carving and releasing as the density comes and goes. **Clarity isn't about removing power, but knowing where it lives.**

Which producers, records, or environments shaped how you approach sound early on - and what's influencing you now?

A mix of the music my parents listened to, and my first experiences at live shows. My dad was a huge rock and metal fan, which gave me an early appreciation of bass-forward music - something which struck me as quite different from a lot of other genres, where the bass is typically buried at the back. Then came my first big gigs, like the *Taste of Chaos* tour in 2006. Feeling the kick drum from those bands tearing through me - like explosions in a blockbuster action movie at the cinema - **it woke something in me. It taught me sound could be physical.**

That idea stuck. **For me, music should be as much a bodily experience as an aural one.** Sometimes that means huge, tight low-end. In other contexts, it's about atmosphere, texture, harmony, and performance.

In terms of producers, **Mark Ronson has always been a huge influence.** I have the utmost respect for his ability to work cross-genre, to function as much as an artist, instrumentalist, songwriter, and performer, as he does as a producer. If I could put my career in any direction, it would be that kind of versatility.

How much of producing, for you, is technical decision-making versus reading the room?

To me, artists are either architects or gardeners. **Architects design everything in advance; gardeners plant something and respond to how it grows.** I'm very much the latter. Writing, pre-production, and

early production are driven by feel - what's missing, what's pulling focus, what needs space.

The technical side comes later when mixing - **does the intent survive different playback systems, different listening environments?** That's where technical decisions really matter. That's when I start mapping things properly, keeping track of focal points and making sure the emotion still lands with clarity.

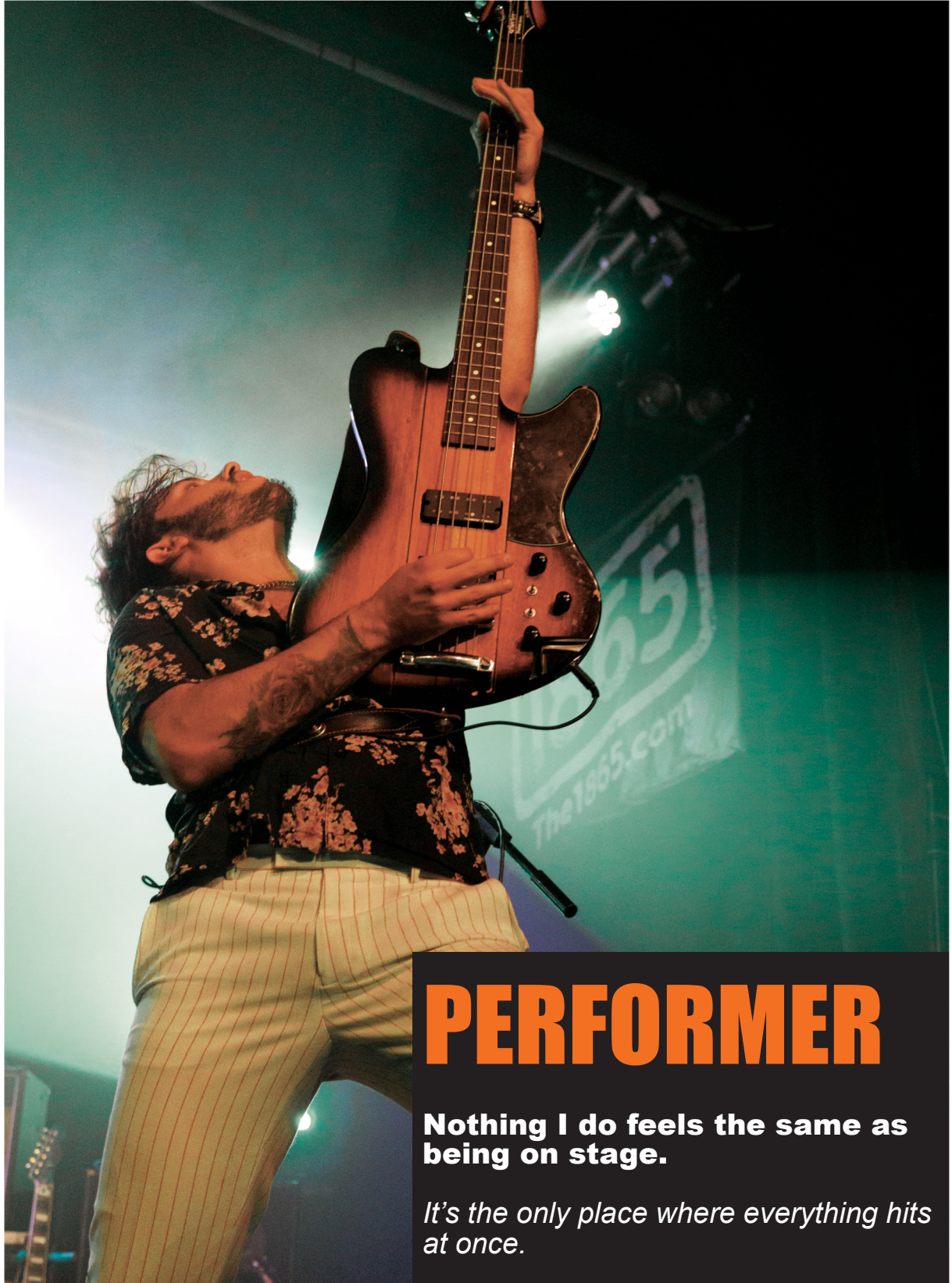
What are you currently questioning or refining in your own production approach?

Compression, endlessly. It's one of those tools you can spend a lifetime learning and still only scratch the surface. Used well, it adds weight, control, and cohesion. Used poorly, it flattens everything it touches. **Finding that balance is critical, especially in dense arrangements.**

Beyond that, I'm constantly reassessing how I use texture. I used to rely heavily on counterpoint - lots of competing rhythmic and melodic ideas. Lately, I've been favouring fewer ideas, layered more deeply with different tonal flavours. But, as ever with me, even that will probably change again.

Clarity isn't about removing power, but knowing where it lives





PERFORMER

Nothing I do feels the same as being on stage.

It's the only place where everything hits at once.

If you're on stage, give people something they can't get anywhere else

What does the stage give you that nothing else does?

Being on stage, I feel like I'm 16 again. I've always been a bit of a thrill seeker - pushing my limits wherever I can, whether that's extreme sports, theme parks, clubbing, anything that spikes the adrenaline. But nothing comes close to the stage.

When the lights drop, the sub starts to rumble, the kick hits you in the chest and the crowd comes back at you - there's nothing like it. **It doesn't matter if it's the first show or the last. It feels the same every time. The stage is the ultimate rush.**

Growing up as a musician, who or what shaped your relationship with being on stage?

I grew up around gigs. I was at a Robbie Williams show before I was even born - my mum was pregnant with me - and from there it never really stopped. **Festivals, arena shows, local gigs... it was just part of life.**

Every step of that journey, from being a fan to becoming a performer, it was always the same things that got me - the lights, the noise, the sense of community, the feeling that something bigger was happening in the room. I've always believed the show matters.

If you're on stage, give people something they can't get anywhere else - something memorable. If I'm watching people stand still and stare at their shoes, I may as well have stayed home and put the record on.

How has playing live influenced the way you write, produce, or arrange music?

Playing live completely re-shaped how I think about serving a song. **It's not about doing more - it's about doing what matters.**

You can play ten notes a second, but in a big room it just turns to mush. There's no space for the vocal, no space for the audience to breathe. Big rooms exaggerate everything, so clarity becomes even more important. A guitar, a bass, and a kick all hitting together - tight, intentional - can feel massive. But if everyone's overplaying, the whole thing falls apart.

You learn very quickly that power comes from intention, not excess.



What are you listening for - internally or externally - when you're performing?

Externally, it's about how everything is interacting - **whether parts are locking in or pushing against each other in a way that creates movement.** Is it sitting right with the drums? Is it supporting the vocal?

Internally, it's all about groove. Everything - melody, lyric, harmony - sits on top of rhythm. If that's locked in, everything else follows. When it's right, you stop thinking and just respond. **And the better that feels on stage, the better it translates to the room.**

Power comes from intention, not excess

Can you describe a moment on stage that stayed with you?

Playing with the late Ken Hensley to 40,000 people in Vladivostok is something I'll never forget.

There was a moment during *Circle of Hands* where the entire crowd lit up - phone torches, lighters - and from one side of the square to the other, all you could see were arms moving in unison. **One melody, one motion, as far as the eye could reach.**

We were on the other side of the world, different language, different culture - none of it mattered. **For that moment, everyone was part of the same thing.**

What do you hope people carry with them after leaving the room?

I want people to feel like they've experienced something, not just watched it. Like, for that time, nothing else existed - no stress, no barriers.

I want them to leave smiling, still riding whatever wave the night gave them, not quite ready for it to end.

And for myself, **I just want to know I gave everything I had - that I left it all out there, every time.**







SONGWRITER

I didn't always trust my own voice.

Songwriting is how I learned to listen to it.

When did songwriting stop being something you did and start being something you needed?

Probably around the time I started trusting my own thoughts and feelings. I wasn't always confident - growing up, I spent a lot of time worrying about what other people thought of me, or more accurately, what I thought they thought of me. Early on, I'd contribute ideas in bands, make suggestions here and there, but I didn't really have my own voice. **I was too focused on playing a version of myself that felt acceptable.**

As I grew into myself, that changed. I started to build my identity around the things that genuinely mattered to me, to hell with the consequences. **Songwriting became a way to slow everything down** - to sit with a feeling, work out where it came from, and decide whether it's real or just a passing moment.

What usually sparks a song for you - is it a feeling, a melody, or something you're trying to make sense of?

It really depends. **The songs that seem to resonate most tend to come from trying to reconcile a strong emotion** - often love or desire, sometimes anger, sometimes gratitude. Occasionally it's about deliberately pushing myself toward a subject I haven't explored before. I almost never write from bravado, though. I know there are people who'd say I have a big ego, but that's very much a persona. Confidence and self-assurance can look like ego from the outside, but at heart I'm still quite introspective. **I don't need to announce that I'm good at what I do. I'd rather make work I'm proud of and let people decide for**

themselves. But hey... never say never.

Growing up, what music or moments shaped the way you think about writing now?

If you take my writing apart, it's basically a mosaic of everything I've ever loved. Early on, it was artists like *Amy MacDonald*, *Green Day*, and *Scissor Sisters*. Then in my teenage years I went heavy with *Avenged Sevenfold*, *Slipknot*, and *Bullet For My Valentine*. As I hit my 20's, I did a full 180 back into pop, but more as genre explorations than single-artist obsessions - Deep House, DnB, Hyper-pop, etc. These days, I gravitate just as much toward acoustic-led artists like *The Paper Kites* or *Paolo Nutini*.



I'd rather make something I'm proud of and let people decide

When you strip my early influences back, **the common thread is simple: direct, honest lyrics paired with strong melodic hooks** and harmony that actually support the emotion. Style comes later.

A perfect example is "1000 Doves" by Lady Gaga. On the *Chromatica* album it's a dance anthem, but the piano demo on the Walmart special edition reveals a beautifully written song that would work in almost any setting.

That's the key, as far as I'm concerned: **make sure the song stands on its own before you dress it up.**

How do you know when a song is finished, especially if it still feels emotionally unresolved?

I think that's often the point. To me, a song is finished when it says and feels like the exact moment you're trying to capture. If the emotion is lingering, the lyric might end with a question-mark, and the harmony might avoid resolving, or a motif might trail off into the distance without finality. Some feelings are absolute, some haunt instead. **My job is to capture that feeling honestly, not tidy it up for comfort.**

What do you think people misunderstand most about your writing when they hear it for the first time?

Probably the breadth of what's going on, and how much of it comes from me directly. **I'll often write, compose, and pre-produce everything myself** - bass lines, drum grooves, string and synth parts - all as extensions of the original feeling.

The arrangements can get dense, but that's a reflection of how my mind works. There's often a lot happening at once - a lot of thoughts competing for attention. The music is an audible translation of that. **The challenge, and the satisfaction, is finding clarity and harmony inside the chaos.**

As you've changed, how has your writing changed with you?

My lyrics have become much plainer. Early on, I hid behind metaphor because I thought that was what "real" songwriting looked like - and probably because the ambiguity felt safer. These days, though, I value simplicity. Music is a universal language; if you're going to add words, they should be accessible to anyone who speaks that language. **If a song needs decoding, it misses the point.**

To borrow a line from Horace Ott and Nina Simone - ***Oh Lord, please don't let me be misunderstood.***

Work with me...

If any of this resonates with you, and you want music that actually moves something, I'd love to hear what you're working on. Film, games, artists. From early ideas through to finished records.

If that feels like a fit, let's talk.

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No artist is an island.

*I've been lucky to work with some incredibly talented people who've given their **time, ideas, and support** along the way.*

*I'm a firm believer in creatives **lifting each other up**. If something here caught your eye, you'll find everyone who contributed - and where to find their work - on the next page.*

”

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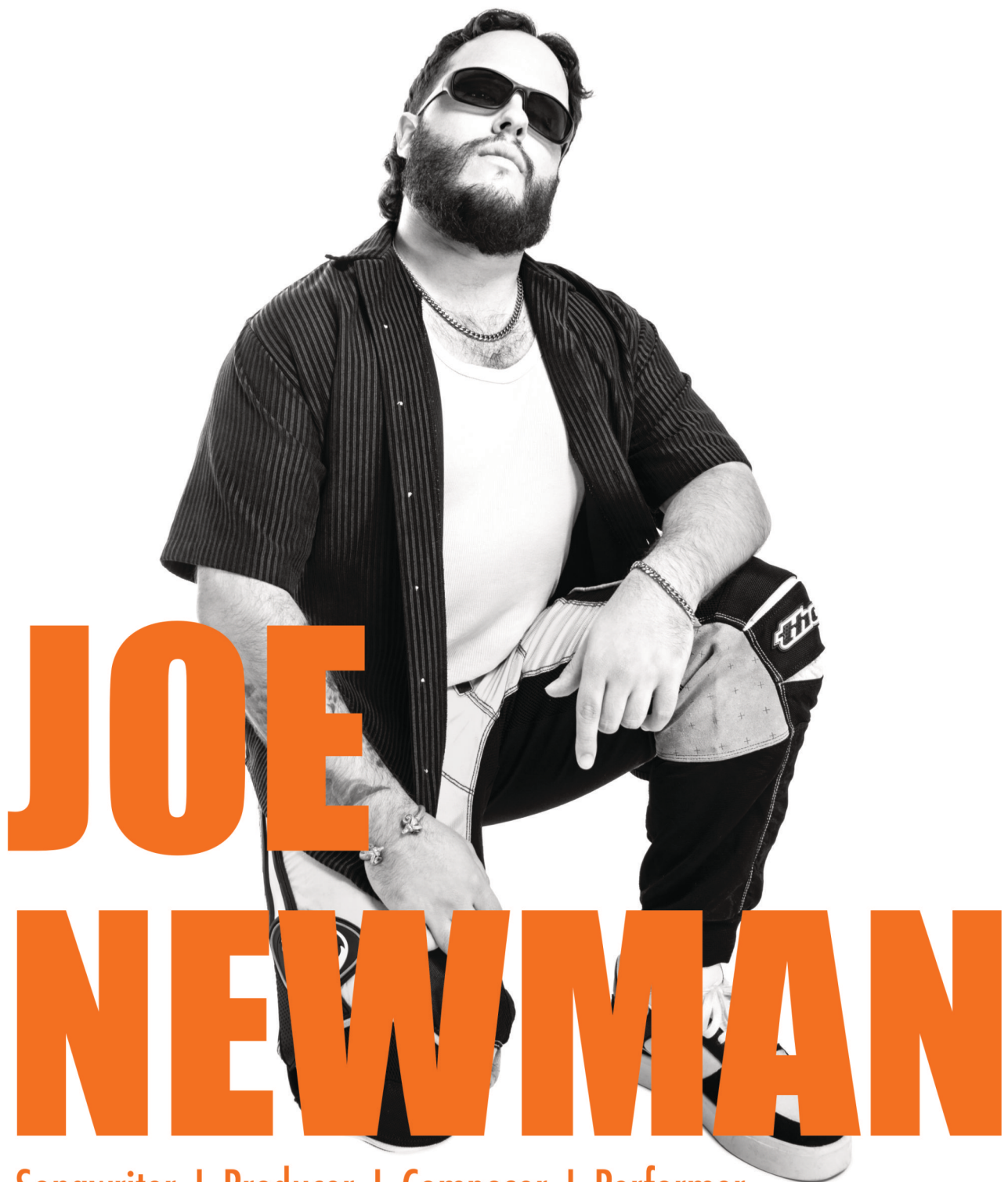
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