

## **“Turn the minds off and enjoy the moment”**

### **An exclusive interview with Riku Rajmaa – Original version**

#### **Riku, was there a specific moment or person who sparked your love for the guitar?**

”Well, I do remember some of my classmates playing acoustic guitar before I had my own in the age of 14 and I was thinking that I would be nice to learn how play something. And I somehow actually remember that there was also pretty clear moment in the same age when I was standing at bus stop and listening to one Salt’n Pepa song’s intro where there is a electric guitar part, and I was thinking that ‘wow, I wish I could play like that!’”

#### **Which lessons from your band days still accompany you today on your solo journey?**

”Well, the same things as always in life in general. Be kind, act nice and stay professional, do your job as well as you can. Behave as you would like the others to behave towards you.<3”

#### **When did the desire to make music on your own arise? What was the decisive turning point?**

”Actually, that started when I got my first guitar and wrote my first song(s). Long time before any professionalism, freelance musician jobs and band things etc. :D”

#### **What does it mean to you to be a musician? How would you describe your music in just a few words?**

”For me it’s a lifestyle. At same time it is a hobby and a profession. My own music is a mixture and melting pot of something that I’ve heard earlier in my life. Many influences from the transatlantic songwriter legacy to poppier approach flavoured with spices and twists from here and there.”

#### **How do you deal with the pressure of expectations, and has your approach to it changed over the years?**

”I try to avoid thinking of any pressure of expectations which is making all things more stressful. I’ve tried to act that way always, and I think I have always been really strict perfectionist on myself, but accomplished to be a bit a more merciful on myself nowadays.”

#### **What feels different today when you’re on stage alone?**

”Well, basically more or less everything feels and is different, except that I’m playing the guitar. ;D But luckily usually I’m not alone when I’m playing the band gigs, because then I’m performing with my own band. Which is absolutely a great thing. :)”

**What has been your most moving and most extraordinary moment with your audience on stage? What do you want to trigger and achieve with your music?**

"The first gig of the first tour was so exciting (it still is exciting) and yet so rewarding to get to pay your own music by yourself and especially when people smile and sing along, it is so rewarding. But same things was experienced also now on this latest tour this Februar. And that's absolutely amazing. Espacially I would like that my music would trigger happiness and soothing joy, but also give comfort and hopefulness to the listener. And what it comes achievements, I would like to get to make more music and play live to many people."

**How do the themes and stories in your songs come about? Do you always sing from your own life? What or who inspires you?**

"Sometimes the themes and stories might be related to some own life events or something that some friend or someone has experienced. Yet, sometimes they just come from out nowhere or somewhere from the subconsciousness."

**Who are your musical role models?**

"I guess there might be many, but for example John Mayer made an impact back in the days bringing the bluesy electric guitar in to the pop context. And I was always drawn to that already before someone else did it in that kinda bigger scale."

**Does a song usually start with a melody or with an emotion for you?**

"Usually it starts with chords and maybe an emotion or a phrase or something, but it depends on the vibe."

**Do you notice a difference between your German and Finnish fans? How do concert moments in Germany and Finland differ in terms of atmosphere, energy, and closeness?**

"One should not generalize, but I would say that the German fans and audiences are much more open and active than the people in Finland. Finns can be digging something heavily, but they might not show it all...:D"

**You also work with other artists. Who would you like to collaborate with someday?**

"Yes, I really like playing and working with other people. Oh boy, there are so many different people from different genres, instruments and parts of the world that it is almost impossible to mention one."

**What would you still like to try musically that might also challenge you?**

"Would be cool to try to learn to play some string or wind instruments but seems to be there's not enough time in the day."

**How would you like to develop your music in the future?**

“Actually, I don’t know and haven’t thought about it at all. I just wish and hope that if the music I’m making appeals to me, I wish it would appeal to some other people as well. And of course the thing to get play live is one of the issues. Because then in the live situations you can do more improvisation and make every moment special and develop in that kind of way.”

**What are your short-term and long-term goals?**

“Really short-term, is first to get some rest from the album finishing stress and then focus on some music making and live playing the upcoming months. ;) And then try to enjoy the Summertime in the meantime while doing some shows. Long-term I just wish good health to everyone and that I could keep on doing things I love with good people. But also I wish that the world would get back on track after all these last years which have been a bit crazy and uncertain times.”

**What can people expect from your performance on July 6, 2026 as part of the ATP 125 Challenger tournament BRAWO OPEN?**

“At least the people can expect some good live music brought to life without any AI. :D But also I hope that people can just escape their daily businessess, turn the minds off and enjoy the moment. I am really looking forward to the BRAWO OPEN!! <3 And also the fact that I really like tennis makes it even more special. ;)”