



When I look at Yuna I firstly see a woman with substance; she doesn't need to bare skin or compromise her morals to increase her sales because she has been able to transcend barriers and reach international status with her undoubtable song writing and vocal talents. She stands for something far deeper than words can say; than images can convey. She is the epitome of what we call a POWER WOMAN. I caught up with Yuna to talk more on her career, the worldwide success of her album Chapters, working with Usher on 'that hit', keeping her personal identity + much more. #BeINspired

Yuna, I'm in love with your style and the way you always look classy and elegant. So many artists are over-sexualised and show off their bodies in order to heighten or speed up their success. However, you have never compromised on who you are and what you represent. How important has it been for you to remain true to yourself and the image you share with your fans?

Thank you! It's very important to me to do it, to keep me balanced. The entertainment industry, and the work that I do, you know it takes a lot from you, it is very demanding. So doing this enables me to keep something that is mine, something I deem special and sacred, and also create something for the world. When the whole world is constantly trying to change you or the public

constantly wanting to know everything about you you have to have a stand, if not you'll just get lost in the chaos.

I have always seen you as a form of storyteller as your music always has a message, which provides the listener with a deeper insight into your thoughts and expression. At what age did you begin to write music and where did you primarily draw inspiration from?

I started at 14, by writing poetries. I was listening to Lauryn Hill, No Doubt, Alanis, Fiona.. all these amazing female singer/songwriters, their music comes from a really strong female standpoint. I was going through a lot of personal stuff myself so it was a great outlet for me.

You taught yourself how to play the guitar, which provides clear insight into your passion for music but it was when you begin sharing your talent and music through MySpace that you made an impact and started to reach new audiences around the world.

Yes, I had to do everything from scratch. It was like – I had an idea, and I had to figure out how to make it come to life, and how do i share it? so social media has been a huge part of it since the very beginning.



Was you prepared for how successful you would become from your uploads on this social media platform and do you feel you would have attained the success you have without a social media presence?

No actually I had no idea that it would be that way. Social media enabled fans to feel closer to their favourite musicians.. I think the fact that I was unknown at the time, and people discovered my music, like they had to actually stumble upon it, made it really special... I don't think I would've been able to do what I do without social media.

How did you deal with moving from being an unsigned artist to a recording artist signed to Fader and what changes immediately took effect?

Being independent was great, but I needed something bigger. Getting signed to a major label (Im now with Verve Records) enabled me to go on tours, you get support to do your music comfortably without having to think about the business side of things. I was able to be fully creative and work with other people, I think that's what made me sign with a label.

You recorded your debut self-titled EP, which went on to snag five Malaysian Music Awards, which included Best New Artist and Best Song. Success is always great but being loved and respected by your own country must have felt amazing. Was you prepared for the success of your debut and how much did your life change after that point?

I think I saw it coming after a while.. the music industry at the time was very exciting – a lot of musicians are putting out their own music – they're not signed, they're fully independent and they're not doing typical ballad music that a lot of Malaysian artists like to fall into because it's safe. A lot of people were taking risks, me included, and I think a lot of my fans appreciated that.



After such success, many artists have failed to deliver on further releases however, you've grown from strength to strength. The EP 'The Decorate' followed and it included the viral hit 'Rocket' which garnered support from powerhouse outlets like 'Billboard'. Do you feel pressure to eclipse past musical successes or do you simply move on and focus on the next project?

I never look back. I'm always on to the next thing. It's very dangerous trying to study back what you've done before, and trying to create something new because you tend to do the same thing. I try to not psyche myself out by being so critical, like if this next project is gonna be as good as the last one- I just ask myself "what do I feel like doing today? Okay then let's do that."

Having gained thousands of fans internationally, what has been your most favourite fan moment to date?

Meet and greets. I try my best to see the fans after my show, it's really tough now as the fan base are getting bigger, I do miss the smaller crowds.. but to be able to talk to them and them telling me how my music helped them is the best. You'll just never know who's listening to your music.

'Chapters', was in my opinion a piece of musical art and will stand the test of time. Having broke into the Top 10 Billboard 100, it led to your winning a number of major awards and it produced the timeless and beautiful duet 'Crush' featuring musical superstar Usher. How did this amazing collaboration come to be and was you prepared for how massive the song was going to be?

We met in 2014 and just talked about life. Nothing about music because I didn't have anything to work on at the time. And when I finally did, I was working on Crush, i just felt like it was a beautiful song that Usher would sound great on. So I went and asked him if he wanted to be a part of it and he said yes. I think I knew that if Usher is going to be on that song, I'll be getting a lot of new fans. I was excited!



Your voices were a match made in musical heaven; what was it like working with Usher and aside from him, what other collaborations would you like to make in the near future?

It was amazing. He was really sweet, really positive and supportive, and really passionate about what he does. You can see it, and you'll hear it in the music too. I was blown away! I'd love to work with Khalid, J.Cole, Coldplay.. the list goes on... oh and Alicia Keys!

Being in the limelight means that you by default become a role model to your audiences and supporters. Have you felt pressure by this or have you taken it in your stride?

I think I'm used to it. I started being in the limelight at 21, and that was in Malaysia, where people are always gonna say something about how to dress and how you carry yourself, I think I did a great job because I was not really a wild child to begin with. I don't mind people seeing me as a role model, I don't feel pressured by it.. I think it's an automatic responsibility when you're a public figure to try your best to not go into the path of destruction.

I always ask my subjects to share deeper insights into their lives by providing tips and pearls of wisdom that will inspire and empower our readers. There is no doubt that on your journey you have encountered some moments where you have hit stumbling blocks or barriers. How have you dealt with these setbacks and what steps have you undertaken to overcoming them.

I think it's important to not dwell in something for too long.. everyone has their struggle, you have to always remember how blessed you are. There's always going to be setbacks – that's what makes life exciting, it keeps you up on your feet and going around, working and be inspired. And if everything is too much, take a step back, and then come back full force.



When the world becomes loud and chaotic, what do you do to calm your mind and resume focus?

I like going to the beach. I'll drive to Malibu and see the sunset, or book a ticket somewhere! I love traveling so I'd do that to get away.

Who would you list as your biggest supporters?

My parents, my husband, and my real fans – fans who really purchase music and appreciate everything that I do!

Who or what inspires you?

I have to say traveling with my husband.. it's my new favourite thing to do. We're best friends and after marriage we found out that we travel really well together, his insight is always so refreshing. I love traveling and discovering new places on my own.. but knowing you get to do it with the person you love.. it's so inspiring.

What is the best advice you've been given?

Stop sweating on the small stuff!

What's next in the pipeline?

New album! I'm currently busy putting a new album together, so im excited about that!

Thank you Yuna for answering our questions, please round it off by completing these sentences.

I am most happiest when.....**I'm at home, on my couch, drinking coffee.**

Self love can...**happens only when you learn how to deal with a tragedy.**

I have faith in.....**good people.**

I'm passionate about... **music and fashion.**

I'm a '**PowerWoman**' because..... **I don't say out loud what I do, I just do, and action speaks louder than words.**

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