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STUDIO SESSIONS

RINI has worked with Wale and Frank Ocean's closest producer to make R&B gold

In this installment of "Studio Sessions," the sensual R&B singer explains how he connected with Wale for "Red Lights," working with Frank Ocean's longtime producer, and the evolution of his creative process.

BY KEITH NELSON JR / 05.26.2023

If you've ever been submerged deep into your feelings because of one of RINI's songs, it's because he gets lost in his own emotions when he crafts those tender [R&B records](#).

"I think 'My Luv' made me cry one time. 'My Luv' is such a vibe. I may have been high (laughs). This was earlier on when I and Bibi [Bourelly] first made the track. It gives me such a crazy nostalgic vibe and makes me miss my girl, man," RINI told REVOLT.

In this installment of "[Studio Sessions](#)," the sensual R&B singer explains how he connected with Wale for "Red Lights," working with Frank Ocean's longtime producer, and the evolution of his creative process. Check out the chat below.

The first song I remember hearing from you was "Red Lights" with Wale from *Constellations*. How did you two connect?

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My A&R linked us up. I originally hoped he would hop on "Over Some Wine" instead, but when he heard "Red Lights," he said, "Nah, I want to hop on that track." That's how it happened. It was in the midst of COVID, so we didn't get in the studio like that. But I was waiting for his verse to come in, and as soon as I heard that, I said, "Yo, this is a whole different vibe." After COVID, when he finally got back to L.A., he pulled up to the music video shoot, which was super dope.

Who's the biggest artist or producer you've been in the studio with?

I'm about to get a session with Malay, one of my heroes. He did *Channel Orange* with Frank Ocean, and I said, "If I can get a session with this guy, we're going to make some crazy stuff." So I'm looking forward to that (laughs). Another one is B.A.M., a producer from Chicago who did half of the *Ultraviolent* EP.

When I get in with new people, I love to get to know them, talk, chill for a little bit, and maybe spend a good hour and a half just catching up... getting to know each other, and telling each other life stories and stuff. That's how you build that connection, whether with a writer or producer, especially if you're trying to [get a particular sound](#) out of them. I feel you need to connect first emotionally. Then, after that, I usually always bring my guitar, so I'll start playing some chords and come up with melodies in my head. Then, everybody contributes, and we build this whole thing, and it's fun, man. It's all fun. There's no structure to it. Whatever feels great just happens.

With such openness with your emotions in the studio, have you ever made songs that brought tears out of your eyes?

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How has your creative process evolved over the years?

You learn how to work smarter, not harder. Things are so simple. Before when I was making music by myself, I saw it as such an impossible thing. I thought I had to be *this* good to make *this* type of music. Being in sessions here is so simple. You literally just catch a vibe. If it feels good, it feels good. You don't have to overcompensate things. I also have more ways to approach writing songs. Back in the day, when I was working by myself, I would just pick up a guitar, and that's how I would write songs. That's the only way I knew how to write songs. Now, I may start with the beat and do something with the beat before I start laying the chords. Some days I'll come up with a melody in my head, make a voice memo, and sample it.

One of the songs from the *Ultraviolet* EP, "Selfish," which was with BEAM, and Cool and Dre. Before we started working or writing on the song, BEAM and I were talking about past relationships. I had an ex that was crazy and selfish. That's how the song came about. We were having a conversation about our past relationships for a whole hour and a half. And then, out of nowhere, he just hopped in the freaking booth and [wrote the song](#) there, bro.

I know you said your *Ultraviolet* EP is your edgy side. What put you in that mood during those sessions?

That was one of the EPs where I stepped out of my comfort zone. I don't rap (laughs). There are songs like "Selfish," where it's almost a rap-type song. There are beats like "Your Eyes," which is more hip hop. It's something I've

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never done before. I always do ballads and neo-soul vibes. So edgy for me means a little bit dirtier — even with the stuff I was talking about in the songs like “Strawberry Blossom,” which is basically a song about the flower (laughs).

What’s the most impressive thing you’ve seen done in the studio?

My homie Sad Money is a genius with synthesizing sounds. It’s crazy how producers hear a sound in their brain, and then they’re able to express that into an actual physical vibration. I don’t know how to explain it, but it blows my mind. How do you know what will make that sound? Sometimes I’d sit there watching them tweak all these knobs, and I’m just like, “That’s insane me.” I would love to learn that once because I feel like the more you know, the easier it is for you to capture the feeling you’re trying to.

What do you have coming up for the rest of the year?

I’m about to go on an Asia tour in July. I’m coming back home to Australia [for a tour](#), as well. We just finished a tour of America and Canada. There’ll also be festivals in Asia. And I’m going to be working on an album. I’m super excited, bro. Big things will be coming, and we got some merch, too. Everything is moving. I’ve been a lot more low-key these past couple of weeks because I’ve just been in the studio cooking up, and that’s all I’m doing right now. I’m just trying to capture this feeling I have. I don’t want to lose the momentum.