

## INTERVIEW FOR PRACTISING SINGER/SONGWRITERS.

Please answer these questions honestly and in as much detail as possible. Thank you for your time!! :-)

- 1) How would you describe yourself as a musician?
  - How long have you been writing music?
  - What does your writing mean to you?

*I would describe myself as a musician who is lucky enough to play almost every day and to call it my profession. I enjoy songwriting more than anything else and plays guitar well enough to join in with other musicians quite well. I started writing my own material when I was about 18 but had no confidence in any of it. Until friends encouraged me to complete my songs I had bits and pieces all over the place. I have just written 2 new songs after almost 2 years of struggling which feels amazing. I'm not very prolific as I spend hours over lyrics and their intentions as well as the melodies being produced by the guitar and vocals. I like to use different tricks in every song and my acoustic album tracks were almost all in different keys. One of latest songs is the first to utilize diminished chords and I dabble in altered tunings a lot too*

- 2) What currently inspires you to do this style of music?
  - How would you describe your music?
  - Have you got a target audience for your music?

*I am inspired by the way I feel about the world; I can only write with passion if I have a strong feeling to convey in the song. I actually wrote this the other day about what my music is like now I am working with a full band and producing the upcoming album myself:*

***“Ryan Inglis’ music is an acoustic guitar base, matured for over 10 years infused with gospel inspired rhythm & melodic bass-lines then garnished with haunting strings & grade A lead guitar hooks and finally seasoned with chopped dance/trance samples. Connoisseurs will appreciate the thoughtful lyrics and the vocal tone (a particular delicacy) Low in fat, Ryan Inglis is also suitable for vegetarians and with a calorie count of 0 you can listen to as much as you like guilt free***

*I got the idea from an article on CD Baby.. I thought it was a bit ‘different’ As far as a target audience is concerned I can see by looking at my **SOUNDOUT REPORTS** (from Slicethepie.com) that my music mostly appeals to the 16 – 24 age range (male & female equally) It also scores highly in the 25 – 34 and 35 – 44 ranges too. You can see what I mean **HERE** with the report from my upcoming single ‘**Secret**’*

- 3) What inspired you to start songwriting?
  - Who or what first got you involved with songwriting?

*I don't really know. I was just spending a lot of time learning covers and I thought I would start putting lyrics to the guitar ideas that any guitarists start putting together at some stage of their learning. It was a self motivated decision and one that, with encouragement grew into something I HAVE to do. There is no better feeling for me than finishing a new song, performing it live and later to hear people singing the lyrics along with you ☺ You don't really get that with anything else*

- 4) Do you think of yourself more as a songwriter or a singer?
  - If neither of these apply, how would you describe yourself and why?

*Well, I only ever used to see myself as a guitarist. Then a guitarist who sang and now I think I am a singer/songwriter with a voice that could stand alone if need be... I'm not a great vocalist but people tell me they like the tone of my voice which is more important than technique I think. As far as songwriting goes I think I do a good job... If I didn't think that nothing would ever be finished, I wouldn't have spent so much money recording them and I would still be playing in my room rather*

than on stage. You have to allow yourself a bit of self praise to keep you moving forward. Whether other people like my music is up to them to decide.

- 5) Has your music got any messages or meanings to it?  
- Do you write for yourself or for others?

*My songs are completely about delivering a message and I try to be thorough with each song. I write about both sides of an argument or idea and end up with a conclusion. I write to get something off my chest but aim to make it available to others who can take it how they want. 'If I Fall' is a song about not meeting up to your own high expectations which I think most people can relate to. Also 'Secret' is about keeping your mouth shut when you know the business of other people and not being a gossip. The main topics of my songwriting seem to be about my own personality (**My Weakness, Panic, Feel Any Feeling**) Past relationships (**Lost, Forgive Me, Little Sun**) Or making the most of your life (**Footprint, Look FWD>>, Focused, One Step At A Time**) Of course there are some wild cards in there too. **Wonderkid** is about a friend of mine who died and **Sea Of Tranquility** is a song about writers block which I find deliciously ironic.*

- 6) Who are your favourite singer/songwriters and why?

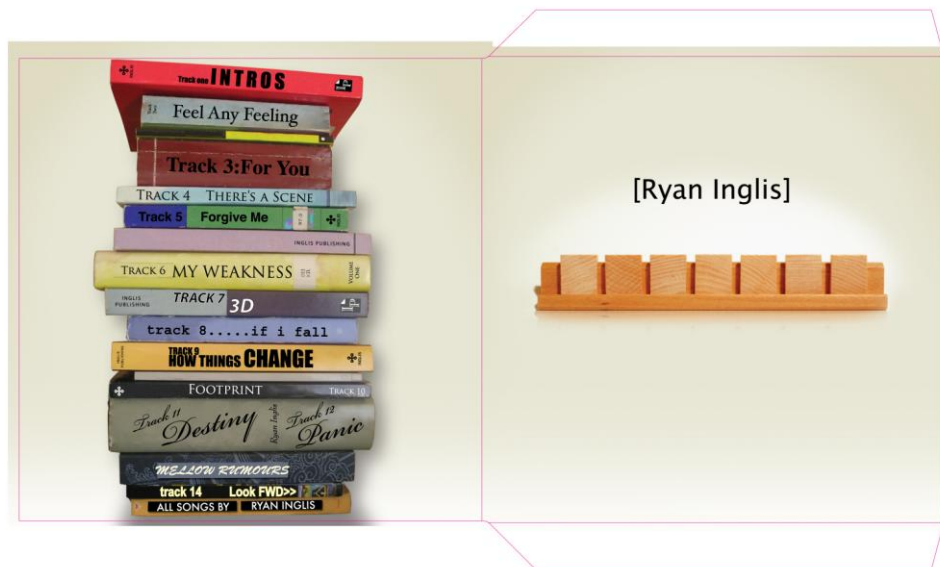
***John Mayer** has to be first mention; listening to his work opened my eyes up to chords I hadn't thought of using before as well as some of his acoustic techniques. I love the acoustic percussion stuff too like Newton **Faulkner, Andy McKee & Erik Mongrain**. I tend to be into the song rather than a certain artist; I learn from many different sources and combine in my own way subconsciously drawing from a massive repertoire of covers that I have learnt over the years.*

- 7) What would you call a good singer/songwriter? What would you call a bad singer/songwriter?

*Mmm. Well there is no good or bad as such. All music is valid as long as the writer means what he/she is putting across. There are no rules to writing but I guess avoiding clichés is always a good start. I think helps to be in tune too but other than that I think everyone has the ability to write an amazing song, just takes the dedication to spend hour's fine tuning the material.*

- 8) How would you describe your musical image? How did you go about determining what image to portray?  
- How do you decide on artwork ie. for EPs, websites etc? Do you design it yourself or get external sources, if so who or what?  
- How important do you think image is to musicians in general and to yourself personally?

*My 'image' is basically just what I look like from day to day. I'm not a trend-setter and would never force myself unnaturally to become one. It works for some people but I am what I am and my music is what it is. I would hate to think I was trying to be something else just to fit in to something. If enough people like you as you are you are the one who gets emulated... which is always nice to see; that you are inspiring others in some way. Artwork is always conceived in my mind and then put to practice by my friends that have the artistic skills... My acoustic album (**7 blank tiles**) was a scrabble tile holder with blank tiles on it. The idea was to portray that the album was open to interpretation and I wanted desperately to avoid the 'portrait holding the guitar looking melancholy' thing that is everywhere. Also the back of the CD had a stack of books with the song titles along the spines – again this was to make things more interesting than a photo with the track listing in some generic font. Here is the artwork to show you what I mean:*



*I am currently working on artwork for my single 'Secret' and have something quite conceptual for it. It would take too long to explain my ideas but I think if you are going to present yourself or your work to the public it has to have appeal. Presentation is very important.*

- 9) Once you have created and recorded a piece of music, how do you go about distributing it?
- How do you use the Internet to facilitate this?
  - Do you rely on a fanbase / mailing list?
  - Do you do the distribution and marketing yourself or use external sources? If so, who or what?

*I have learned so much from the lead up to my single with regards to every step of the process. After rehearsing rigorously you can go to the studio fully prepared which is essential. Next you get the track mixed/produced/arranged etc... and then to mastering. I have my own **Tunecore** account which puts my work on **iTunes & Spotify**. In between you have to drum up interest in the music itself either by playing it live a lot, making live videos and also showing a strong online presence. I use **Facebook** a lot as well as **Twitter, YouTube, SoundCloud, Slicethepie, Reverbnation, TalentWatch, Last FM** and of course my own website ([www.ryaninglis.com](http://www.ryaninglis.com)) to get the music out there. You can't sell anything if no one knows you exist. I have been growing a fanbase over the past 4 years – I'm hoping it has got to the point now where I have enough support to make some real waves. I do all the work myself from beginning to end – I have no manager or record label pulling the strings which is important to me. It's harder and takes longer but the rewards are mine and mine alone at the end of the day.*

- 10) How important is the Internet to your development as a singer/songwriter?
- What sites do you use regularly for distribution/advertisement?
  - If the Internet was not available to you, do you feel this would affect your capabilities in getting your music heard?

*The internet is ESSENTIAL for any unsigned artist and the information available to you is invaluable. Unless you travelled massively and had a huge reputation I doubt 99% of songwriters would achieve anything beyond their own local area without the internet. To write down all the sites I use would take too long – there is so much there*

- 11) How important is it to you that you perform live music events/gigs?
- How often do you perform at such events yourself? How do you decide what performances to play or not to play?
  - How do you use these events to market yourself / increase your audience?
  - How often do you attend live music events (by both signed and unsigned artists) as a consumer not a performer?

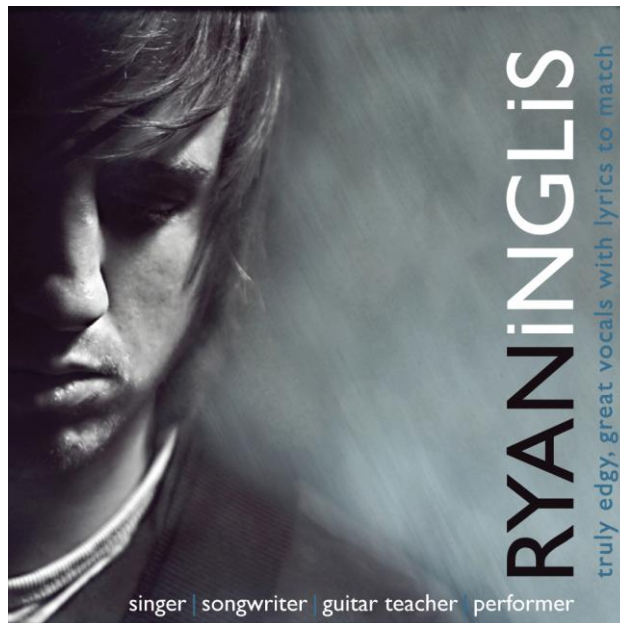
*Playing live is my bread and butter. I perform around 170 gigs a year as well as numerous open mics to get 'seen' in new places. It's important to get yourself out and about and for people to hear your name regularly – you then begin to become familiar and people like familiarity. Even if you are not the greatest songwriter in the world if enough people have heard of you things start to happen. For the past year I have been using 'beer mats' to promote myself at gigs; people pick them up and read the info and either take them away or leave them for the next people to sit down. Business cards are essential and professional looking posters make a lot of difference. These are the ones I currently use:*







**RYANiNGLiS** is a singer  
 songwriter & guitar teacher  
 from the South West UK.  
 If you like what you're hearing  
 you can download live recordings  
 now for FREE via the download  
 section at **RYANiNGLiS.com**  
 Ryan's original material is available  
 to buy on Spotify and iTunes.  
 Available for private and public  
 bookings as solo acoustic,  
 duos, trios or full band.  
 email me@ryaninglis.com



**RYANiNGLiS**  
 truly edgy, great vocals with lyrics to match

singer | songwriter | guitar teacher | performer

12) How would you define 'success' regarding a singer/songwriter?

- Would you define yourself as successful and why?
- If not, what do you feel you would have to achieve to call yourself successful?

*Success is mostly a personal set of goals that have been achieved. For some just writing and recording is enough. Others may strive for world domination. For me this is a 'see how far it can go' situation. I already call performing my living and have recorded an acoustic album that has sold well over 1000 copies.. I have goals to follow up on which I will continue to work towards until complete. If nothing comes of it I am more than happy with how well I have done so far. I would say I am not as 'successful' as I would like to be but still consider myself to have achieved a lot already for which I am very grateful for.*

*For me success is having a body of work to look back on that you are proud of. I am now lucky enough to be recording at Abbey Road studios and aiming to get into to vharths with support from fans of my music. I do not put out material that has not been painstakingly put together; someone once said that doing things halfarsed will leave you unsatisfied in the future... I would like to think that someone will hear my music long after I am dead and still see the hard work and passion that*

*was put into it. Your music is your legacy and should be treated as such. Another ambition of mine is to play a show that people have paid to see especially; I mostly play pubs where the audience are punters. It would be great to play to a room full of people who have consciously made the effort to listen to my music and paid a ticket price.*

13) Please leave one tip you think is invaluable for aspiring/beginner singer/songwriters to know.

*You can do anything you put your mind to. You can't wait for someone else to spot you and do everything on your behalf. Learn as much as you can about every aspect of the industry and play live as often as you possibly can, with as many other musicians as you can find. Being truly independent puts you in a strong position to reap the rewards you have worked so hard for. There are a lot of people who want to make money off your talents... don't let them. Believe in yourself and don't settle for anything less than your best.*