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Gold foil coat by CALVIN KLEIN, trousers and trainers by ADIDAS.

This time last year, most radio listeners would have struggled to pick out a song by Jack Garratt: despite a deal with major label Island Records, he just had a couple of bedroom-produced EPs to his name, mere tasters of the shuddering, stuttering synths and soulful vocals he was working on.

These days though, his name peppers the line-ups of just about every major global music festival you can think of, and his debut album, *Phase*, shot into the top three of the UK album chart on its release. In autumn, he is to undertake a UK headline tour.

On the face of things, the 24-year-old has enjoyed a rapid, ready rise to the top, the kind that is sort-of guaranteed when you've been garlanded as the BBC's Sound of 2016 – a headline-grabbing honour previously handed out to Adele and Sam Smith. So far, so slick. But as it often turns out with a star-explodes-out-of-nowhere narratives, this one has been grafting away, taking a few wrong turns here and there, for years.

One thing to know about Garratt: he takes whatever he's working on very seriously. He had always wanted to be a musician, and five years ago, a decision to train as a teacher derailed when he realised that he simply wasn't challenging himself. "I was using a very noble profession as a safety net," he admits. And so he walked out of university. In the time between then and now, as Garratt puts it: "I found a place in London, locked myself in a room and wrote."

Garratt credits his confidence in committing to music with moving to a city and finding friends to create with. "Moving to London changed the way I thought about myself. It was a windowless room in a Notting Hill ex-council flat, on a street with some of the highest and lowest incomes in the UK. I was adopted by this huge family of really creative people that lived in west London. We would put on gigs for each other. I spent a few months being a drummer for a guy who needed one." The rent

was paid "by making music for online advertising. And I was lucky to have a lot of friends that worked in bars..."

A mile-a-minute talker, Garratt is frank about the costs involved in making music, and the impact of this on emerging musicians. "The music industry asks and expects people with no money to spend with the hope that they might make it back. People lose everything to go on tour. Even then, they'll say: 'But we still managed to go out and play in front of people.' The point is not the money you make, it's the experience, but the system isn't in place to help new artists."

Music is stuck in an industry that doesn't seem to know how to look after its own, he suggests. "There is very little money that exists in selling records. I don't make a lot of money. I just don't. I have to work very hard and organise everything so that it's within budget. I am very fortunate though, and very aware that there are thousands of creative people who have much harder problems."

Interestingly for a man whose album was written, produced and performed pretty much exclusively by himself, Garratt's advice for young artists is to find a "family" of likeminded people. "There is no right or wrong way to do the thing you love. There isn't a hand you can grab on to. All there is are people who can share their ideas with you, and you can share your ideas with them."

And despite the mainstream success, Garratt remains a big advocate of making music as far away from record labels' eyes as possible. "It's a cheaper way to do it. I still choose to work at home — that's how I've done it for years. I hate sterilised, clean studios. They feel like hit factories, there's nothing creative about it."

Garratt's vision for the future of the industry is more dystopia than utopia. "I'm hopeful for its destruction. Past that, will come an industry that cares about the artists and cares about the audience. I think it will crumble and rebuild itself."

**The Island  
 Record-signed  
 musician  
 ushering in the  
 collapse of the  
 music industry.**