

the **S**unday MUSIC



by **ANNA GAULT**

ROCKER Nathan James reckons he owes his band's success to his reality show roots.

The singer may have flopped on TV hit *The Voice* but he and group *Inglorious* are now touring the world.

Nathan, 29, auditioned for the talent show in 2012 but none of the coaches – Jessie J, Will.i.am, Tom Jones or Danny O'Donoghue – swivelled round in their chair to pick him.

He went on to reach the quarter-finals of ITV's *Superstar* – Andrew Lloyd Webber's search for a new lead in his musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* – later that year.

Nathan said: "I am really happy that my band is doing well but genuinely, part of the reason is because of reality TV.

"When you come off shows like that, you have an instant fanbase of people who want to know what you are doing next.

"I have still got fans that have been following me for six years now."

And Nathan revealed that record companies now take a wannabe's social media following into account before signing on the dotted line.

He said: "The reality shows helped me get a record deal.

"When I went to my label and said I have a band and want to get a record out, they have a look at your social media followers and if you already have 20,000 followers interested in you, it makes much more sense for them to sign you than someone who has none."

Inglorious have released two albums in just two years after getting together in 2014 and are supporting eccentric rockers *Steel Panther* as they kick off their tour in Glasgow this month.

"It's odd that people want my sweaty towel"

And Nathan, along with lead guitarist Andreas Eriksson, bassist Colin Parkinson, drummer Phil Beaver and rhythm guitarist Drew Lowe, are enjoying certain perks that come with the job.

Nathan said: "At the *Steel Panther* shows we have been supporting, you sign a lot of body parts. The band are renowned for having a lot of free-spirited women at their shows.

"And you always end up signing a lot of boobs – but some are easier to sign than others."

Nathan admits that the glam metal band – who are known for their crazy antics – love to party

I can be a Superstar thanks to reality TV

Says Voice contestant

NATHAN JAMES



TOUR... Nathan with *Inglorious*, and below, Andrew Lloyd Webber

but don't take things too far. He said: "We already toured Europe with them about a year ago and the one question people keep asking is, 'Are they really like that all the time?'"

"And yes they are, they are that fun and funny, they party hard. They are just up for a good time."

While *Steel Panther*'s fans show their dedication by stripping off at shows, *Inglorious*'s followers have their own bizarre behaviour.

Nathan said: "I find it really odd when people want to take my sweaty towel at the end of

the show. That is something that I will never be OK with – I don't get it.

"I don't give them it – I leave it at the back of the stage on purpose.

"I would throw that thing in the bin – it always creeps me out a bit."

Inglorious have only been together for three years but they have already had their fair share of drama when it comes to band members.

Guitarist Wil Taylor left the band in December 2016 with Nathan blaming his "attitude".

Nathan said: "There has only been one real line-up change since the band started and we had to let them go because of their attitude.

"It was a group decision – it wasn't just myself.

"No one would leave our band, we are doing really well but if you f*** up, you'll be told where to go and that's what happened."

The English band are looking forward to heading north of the border later this month but not just to see their fans.

Nathan said: "I am looking forward to working with the amazing crew in Scotland.

"On our last gig up there we had the best crew ever – they were really enthusiastic, helpful and friendly.

"The Scottish fans are so much louder than the rest of the UK.

"They are always a good crowd and always up for a good fun night."

●*Inglorious* play the O2 Academy, Glasgow, on January 20



SWYM

WHERE: Aberdeen
FOR FANS OF: Radiohead, Tame Impala, The Flaming Lips

JIM SAYS: Musical chameleon Nassif Younes emerged late last year with his enthralling debut EP *Your Distraction*.

He started on acoustic guitar as a relative late-comer at 17. He later took up piano, learning Beethoven sonatas and dabbling with bass and drums.

Now 26, he makes a living as a music tutor, classical guitarist and producer. *Your Distraction* is a step in the right direction for establishing himself as an artist in his own right.

Performing as *Swym*, it's very much a DIY affair. Though a solo project, he was joined in the studio by Kris Elliot on drums, bass player Byron Burnett and vocalist Scott Bruce.

He explained: "I love to write songs, but I've never been able to sing which is quite a pain."

Scott also sings with Aberdeen alt. rockers *Forest Fires*, who Nassif used to play with. He added: "I had wanted to do the drums by myself on the EP but I got offered a hand from Kris after meeting him in a studio that I work in. He only had to hear



NEW MUSIC

By Jim Gellatly

each song twice before he started recording and it was like world-class content. We got all the drums for five songs done in an afternoon."

The tracks showcased on the EP set things up perfectly for the debut album he's working on. The stunning first single *Up To You* opens the collection. A slice of quirky indie-pop with psychedelic undertones. Other highlights include the brooding *That's So Drugs*, *Man* and the hypnotic *Useless Dreaming*. *Dark Wine* veers off in an experimental jazz direction to great effect.

Closing track *Exo* is a beautifully layered epic with hints of Radiohead. The songs are a great indication of where he is now, having found a

musical landscape he's happy with. He said: "My first songs were very acoustic folk but then when I was able to afford recording equipment I just tried everything. Since then, I've written classic rock, piano solos, string quartets, techno and heavy metal. I even tried reggae and rap at one point which was pretty disastrous!

"These days I just like writing catchy pop stuff. The old influences always squeeze in though and I've always liked psychedelia so there's plenty of that too."

As his music has developed Nassif's outlook has changed. He said: "Alternative bands like to talk about having a 'raw sound'. That's often just an excuse for a bad sound!

"And while pop artists tend to be really slick with their production and melodies, they can also be really boring with their lyrics. Getting over that boundary between alternative and pop has been the biggest help for my writing."

The next step for *Swym* is to hit the road. If the EP is anything to go by, we are in for a treat.

MORE: swymmusic.com
●Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on *Amazing Radio* Sundays 2-4pm.

amazingradio.com
jimgellatly.com

▶ Watch a video of the band playing at: www.thescottishsun.co.uk