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## PRODUCER CROSSTALK

# Guy Erez

Comedy Central,  
Marvel/Disney,  
Alan Parsons



By Rob Putnam

Producer and songwriter Guy Erez got his industry start as a bass player. He moved into production when musician and friend Goldo—co-creator of the song “Boom Da Boom,” as heard on Fox’s Tuesday night lineup—asked him to produce his first album for Epic Records. Erez went on to sign a publishing deal with Chrysalis Music, write and produce for artists such as Jennifer Love Hewitt and to pen theme songs for MTV, Comedy Central and Marvel/Disney.

Whether he’s asked to write for an artist or a TV show, he’s often given a tight deadline. “There are many situations in which you have to come up with something right away; to make it sound like a finished product,” Erez explains. “You have to be able to follow direction and deliver quickly. Once you’re in the right state of mind [while] collaborating with someone, stuff comes through us. It’s just a matter of capturing it and then moving back and listening to it. This is where the craft comes in.”

When preparing to write or produce, Erez immerses himself in his work. “I prepare myself as the vassal so that things can come through me,” the producer says. “Once I go into the studio, it’s very intuitive. There’s a lot of trust in the process. Sometimes I’ll hear a melody or a groove in my head and I’ll lay it quickly as a rough. As soon as there’s a spark, I go with it. A big part of it is preparing mentally for an assignment. Once you do that, the right thing will come through you.”

His publishing deal with Chrysalis has helped his career in many obvious but also less obvious ways. “It made me write a lot,” he explains. “It made me feel legit when someone came to me and said ‘Here’s an advance. We want you to crank out a lot of songs.’ They also used their connections to get me co-writing work. And working with other writers kept me current and was a good way to get feedback.”

The biggest challenge he faces as a producer is working with inexperienced artists. Convincing them to let go and have faith in the process isn’t always as easy as he’d like. “It takes time to get some artists to loosen up and trust that whatever is happening is great and not question it immediately,” he observes. “There’s also the challenge of dealing with assignments when people aren’t sure what they want. It’s like a puzzle. Sometimes what you give them isn’t what they asked for, but they like it.”

Most of the obvious production elements are rarely overlooked by competent producers. Then there are the more nuanced aspects that distinguish one producer from another—arrangement, for example. “I see a huge difference when you arrange a song right,” Erez notes. “The production is then half done. Nobody gets credit these days as an arranger. It’s become the role of the producer.”

### The three most important things he’s learned as a producer are:

- Listen—as a musician and as a producer—so that you can deliver what you’re supposed to.
- Your production is as good as the song you’re producing. If you’re working with someone else’s material, sit with them and don’t be shy about asking for rewrites. A great song will produce itself.
- Be honest—with yourself and the people around you—in a diplomatic way. To make the best art, you have to be honest.

Erez records primarily from his own studio but is easily mobile. He often hires local musicians that also have their own recording space, unplugs his hard drive and soon sets up shop in their studios. “As we work in *Pro Tools* and share files,” he observes, “the need for a big studio isn’t as strong as it once was.” He recently played bass on Florence and the Machine’s new version of “I’m Not Calling You A Liar,” which is the theme song in the new *Dragon Age* video game, and is now headed to South America to perform with the “Alan Parsons Live project.” He is also writing more for Marvel.

Contact Guy Erez, [Guy@GuyErez.com](mailto:Guy@GuyErez.com), [guyerez.com](http://guyerez.com)



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