

WORDS LAUREN JOHN

NO LIMITS

LAUREN JOHN CAUGHT UP WITH MALTA'S WORLD RENOWNED DJ, TENISHIA.





"Lots of people out there think that all that DJ's do is download music off the internet and play it at events, but it's far beyond that, especially if you want to go international." Put all your misconceptions aside and take a peek into the world of Joven Grech, who under the stage name Tenishia is one of Malta's most successful cultural exports.

Long before Tenishia was a name and identity recognised around the world, this proud Maltese was dreaming of becoming a DJ, working his way up from a community radio station, and his first club residency at the age of just 16. He has now made the DJ Mag Top 100 DJs in the World, played famous festivals such as Tomorrowland, and performed everywhere from Asia to Egypt.

Working hard to take your career to an international level as a DJ is no mean feat, but there are often misconceptions between what you see on social media, the "glimmer and shine" as Joven puts it, and what is actually involved behind the scenes. When Joven puts

his Tenishia hat on its "lots of flying hours sitting behind a plane window, being away from your family and friends, lack of sleep, and loads of other sacrifices that come with the job. It's a job that is solely driven by passion, ambition, and will, with a lot of risks of failure." The sharp contrast between the social media images of "the parties, the girls, and the fun" and the reality of being a DJ is one part of it, but what about the job?

Joven has already touched on the fact that people think DJ's are misconceived as nothing more than music downloaders, but what does it take to keep the Tenishia brand going every week? In normal times it's "music production, social media content, preparing radio shows, live streams, organising events, searching for new music, and business meetings with venues and sponsors. They are only some of the things I have on my agenda every week."

But wherever his bookings take him, all roads eventually lead back home, and home is not just where the heart is, it's where magic ➤



has happened. Needing a break from travelling, Tenishia events stayed local in 2019, and the 'Chasing Sunsets' project was born. The premise was simple, live streamed broadcasts with a backdrop of historic or natural landmarks, taking place at "the most beautiful time of day for filming purposes." Sunset vibes and beautiful places sounds idyllic, with sessions taking in the Santa Marija Tower, Ramla Bay in Gozo, the Mercury Tower in St Julians, and one very special location. "Fort Saint Angelo in Vittoriosa was practically a very meaningful place. Firstly because it's one of the greatest Maltese landmarks, and secondly because I grew up in the Cottonera/Three Cities area, which basically gave Malta its own identity through its rich history." Hundreds of people got to enjoy these spectacular events, in person before Covid struck, or online, where the live streams reached over 10 million people. Such was the success, there are already talk to take 'Chasing Sunsets' to the next level when events are safely allowed to resume on the island.

It's important for DJ's to embrace the latest trends wherever they showcase them, and although it's nothing new, orchestral & DJ collaborations have gone viral in recent years, and brought electronic dance music to a wider audience. When Valleta became European Capital of Culture in 2018, Tenishia joined forces with the Malta Philharmonic for the opening day celebrations in St Georges

Square. Thinking outside the box always helps him keep things fresh, and reach a wider audience with his music, this project included. "I knew there was going to be a mixed age group attending, so I wanted to build a journey by performing electronic dance from different eras, starting from the 70s and coming to the early 2000s. I was greatly helped by a talented local film composer Damian Mizzi who was the perfect bridge between myself and the orchestra. It took us 3 months in the studio to produce the performance, it was quite a job."

For the past year that job has been idle, and like many Joven had to take his creativity back home, in to the studio, and online to try and "make the most out of it" A break from the busy DJ life has given him more time to come up with new ideas, and more time to think. The Covid pandemic has perhaps been a reminder that, "Like doctors, musicians, singers, and DJ's are healers. We don't heal people physically, but mentally. I love the fact that I can use my abilities to excite and make people happy with music. It simply makes me complete." ✨

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 Watch all the live stream events and more at www.youtube.com/tenishia or keep up with all the latest news on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Tenishia>.