

# BEYOND THE STAGE

INTERVIEWS

## Get To Know: Ezina

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The music industry is often viewed as a place for the select few. Ezina is a musician who seeks to shed light on the inner workings of the music industry. We had the chance to chat with Ezina about her personal musical journey, and her podcast, Guitar Goddess.

**Beyond the Stage: So let's go back a little bit. Tell us how you got started in the realm of music?**

Ezina: I started when I was really young. I always say I started when I was 6 months old, because that's the first recording of me singing "Benny and the Jets". I've always loved music; I've always been involved in music in one way or another, but as a child I started singing really early. From that I started participating in talent showcases. That lead to a record contract when I was 17. It just continued. It's been a life-long obsession.

**BTS: Wow. That's crazy. How was that for you?**

Ezina: It was an interesting experience because I was still a child really. I was signed to this record label and here you have all these fancy people who are writing songs for you, promoting you, and doing all of these things for you – it was a lot for a young person to... You know, I'm from a small town so it's a lot for a young person to take on. But very exciting at the same time.

**BTS: What did that transition look like from you signing to Atlantic to your radio show, Guitar Goddess?**

Ezina: Well getting dropped from a record label – which I did get dropped – which happens in some artist's lives when you're not prepared for an opportunity. A fish out of

water kind of situation. I became an indie artist and I started my own record label once I matured a little and learned a bit more about the industry. From that I started my record label. I just wanted to really start a place where people could come and get the information that I didn't have as a young girl. You need to understand what it means to be a touring artist. So, with Guitar Goddess, that was my aim. There's a lot coming at you and I really just didn't want another really young girl to go through what I went through. It was really to just give back to the community and give back to the younger community that's coming up.

**BTS: It's incredible because it's very difficult to find that type of information. A lot of people aren't really willing to share that information or their experiences. It's a very protected industry.**

Ezina: Well I feel like there is a lot of shame around it. People have shame in saying that [they] were dropped from a record label; shame in saying, "I've failed at something." But I don't really see it as a failure. I feel like it's so important that women get together to talk and share and I just want to remove the shame around not knowing. You can't know everything. You're entering a new industry and you're a new artist. Behind that is a business and an infrastructure. If you don't understand the workings of the business or the infrastructure you can really get lost. I just want to protect that from happening any further.

**BTS: Definitely. You have a boot camp that teaches this, correct?**

Ezina: I do. I started the Indie Artist Bootcamp. It basically walks artists through what it means to be an artist from the business side. You are a small business. You have to understand all of the workings behind the scenes: what to look for in your contracts,

how to build a team, how to market yourself, how to tell your story. I walk you step by step on how to book a tour and get butts in the seats. It's a business. You always have to look at your ROI on everything.

**BTS: That's incredible. Now is that just for musicians or for anybody in the creative realm?**

Ezina: Anybody that's in a creative realm. I also walk actors through getting headshots, [and] getting yourself out there before you get an agent. Build some buzz for yourself. Same for filmmakers. You've made this film, now how do we get it out there? What are the steps you need to take? What are the festivals you need to go to? If you're trying to get your work out there, I can give you the blueprints.

**BTS: Through your radio show, Guitar Goddess, has there been a favorite episode or story that you've been able to bring light to?**

Ezina: There are two. One is by [Katie] Ferrara. She is a street performer and I love, love, love her story so much. She went out and started street performing at farmer's markets. From that she did an ad for Toyota. Her career is just blowing up because she took ownership and decided that [she] wasn't going to wait for someone to hire [her]. She has made a nice six figure living doing this. She's just one example and I want people to get that. Another episode that I really, really love is the Paula episode. She talked about everything; from being in school, to getting her record deal, to signing, to what that means on a personal level. That's something that people don't talk about much. So, I really honor and respect her for coming on the show and sharing her personal life. As an artist, it's really important to have those multiple streams of income. Be sure to listen to Guitar Goddess [here](#) and follow Ezina on Twitter [here](#).