

Nabihah Iqbal

Nabihah Iqbal is a London-based musician and DJ. Trained as a lawyer, Iqbal developed as a music artist under the pseudonym *Throwing Shade*, releasing a handful of EPs and DJing extensively across London. Her debut LP - *Weighing of the Heart* - released under her real name, was less electronic in style and involved a band drawn from musicians based in and around Damon Albarn's Studio 13.

Your first album is a culmination of the whole life's experience that's gone before so you can really indulge it (quoted in The Observer, 31st March 2018).

It is heavily influenced by the music of her teenage years – a soundtrack of multiple styles and sounds: Michael Jackson, Britpop, ska-punk, New Order and Pet Shop Boys. Iqbal sees the LP as a vital outcome as an artist in a process of self-discovery and development. As the first Asian British Female artist signed to and released on Ninja Tunes, Iqbal is clear of the opportunity and responsibility that comes with it:

I feel like 2018 is going to be an important year for me – building from this personal achievement.

Momentum funding enabled Iqbal to record her debut LP, to make it happen:

I didn't have the money to record and I needed somewhere to go and write. I was so grateful and blessed to get the funding and to get the space in Studio 13. It's a hub where I can ask advice and everyone is friendly.

Iqbal is clear that the funding could not have come at a better time for her creative and professional development. With 5 EPs released as *Throwing Shade* and a deal with Ninja Tunes, she was generating growing interest and could sense a real trajectory emerging. But without the funding, she would not have been able to capitalise on this, with insufficient funds to invest in the time and space to write, record and build a trusted community.

Iqbal is also very positive regarding the role of the PRS Foundation as an enabler and supporter of her development:

They have been really good...they put a lot of trust in you and they support your wider development. A team came over to the studio and did a mini interview, and put me on the cover of PRS for Music's M Magazine.

Momentum funding has also opened-up Iqbal's interest in applying for other funding, including *Women Make Music*.

It's so tough – concentrating on the LP meant I didn't do many gigs, which meant I didn't make any money...but I also want to develop creatively.

Iqbal “is a trailblazer, one of only a handful of women of colour in the history of British guitar music”. (The Observer, March 31st 2018). She commissions poets as her support acts and is restless in her passion for different cultural influences, not content to simply operate or be pigeonholed as a ‘British Asian woman’. Momentum has played a huge part in enabling Iqbal to be herself.

