

Oh Wonder

Oh Wonder are London based duo Josephine Vander Gucht and Anthony West. Josephine and Anthony originally had no ambitions to perform as the duo. Oh Wonder was conceived as a song-writing project, with the idea to write songs together for other people to subsidise their solo careers.

In September 2014, they created a Soundcloud page with the plan to build up a portfolio of songs over a year, uploading one song each month. Their profile description on Soundcloud was originally “*Writing duo, one song a month*”.

The reaction to their first song *Body Gold* was totally unexpected: it amassed 100,000 plays in just three days. The next month the same thing happened and it snowballed with each month. Their popularity was purely driven by social media and individuals listening to, liking, and sharing the music. Even 10 years ago this wouldn't have happened. It was all about the sound, there were no images of them.



Then they started to get radio play and people started asking where they could see them play. There was no tour plan, there was no album plan. They decided to put an album of the 12 songs they had uploaded to soundcloud. Matt Johnson from Red Light Management, who had previously worked with Anthony, became their manager.

The Momentum grant in 2015 provided support for a strong PR team and campaign around key singles and the debut album release.

Momentum fund was just at the right time. A lot of eyes and ears were on what was going to happen with the album. There was already a core audience for songs already out there but this was a new type of album and a new way of doing things.

People in the industry thought they were mad putting out a collection of songs already released as a first album. It did work, people bought the album and venues like Brixton Academy and a same size venue in LA sold out. At that point the audience was still largely word of mouth too. The gigs were different too as the audience already knew all the songs on the newly released album.

Oh Wonder have continued to tour since the launch of the first ‘collections’ album in 2015. They launched a second album with new songs in 2017 – *Ultralife* – again writing, recording and mixing everything themselves.

They toured with that album to 35 countries playing 150 shows. In 2018 they are touring Asia, Americas and Europe. Their huge word of mouth following means they can do sell out tours but still fell a bit ‘underground’. They plan to continue to release music, but are also trying to create space to write for others now too.

As Matt from Red Light Management explains:

The Momentum Fund can be a huge catalyst to an artist's career. The money helps to kick start projects and enable artists to get other people on board. It's really interesting to see what else comes through the fund too – the diversity of genres is great.