**Mike WiLL Made-It**

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What does it mean to make it? When you’re a sixteen-year-old aspiring producer shopping your beats outside an Atlanta recording studio, making it might seem as simple as getting someone to let you sit in on a session. Five years later you’ve made a lane for yourself in the city’s music scene with some high-profile placements. But you won’t feel like you’ve “made it” until you executive produce a whole project, or earn your first Platinum plaque. Fast forward a few more years and you’ve got so many of those plaques you’ve run out of wall space to hang them. You turn on the radio and the sound of contemporary popular music has your fingerprints all over it. The trophies don’t matter as much as they used to. Now you’re trying to find the next kid standing outside of a studio somewhere waiting for their shot. Success is a subjective experience and the finish line is always a mirage. But no matter how you measure it, Mike WiLL Made-It has definitely made it.

Born and bred in Marietta, Georgia, he arrived on the Atlanta music scene by way of an early encounter with a local legend, Gucci Mane, who bestowed the young producer’s moniker in a 2007 mixtape freestyle - “Gucci Mane slayed it, Mike WiLL made it”. The co-sign from one of trap music’s founding fathers would serve as a launch pad. Mike WiLL spent the rest of the aughts establishing a reputation for himself as one of the city’s go-to guys for beats. But his aspirations extended far beyond that.

“A lot of artists wouldn’t let producers pull up to the studio back then. They’d be like “Just send a pack.” But I wanted to be involved in the whole process. From the production to choosing the right features to the mixing and mastering. I wanted to be the one putting all the pieces of the puzzle together. I wanted to call those plays.”

The breakout success of Future and 2 Chainz marked the beginning of a paradigm shift when Atlanta surpassed New York City as Hip-Hop’s epicenter. The songs that took Future and 2 Chainz from the city’s strip club circuit to the Billboard Hot 100 in 2011 had something in common: Mike WiLL made them. His formula - a hazy interplay between trunk rattling 808s and synth-driven melodies - bridged the gap between Atlanta trap and American Top 40. It added a glossy coat of polish to something that was inherently raw and rough around the edges without compromising its core. That formula would soon make him the most sought-after producer in the music industry. By 2014 he had a dozen certified Gold and Platinum records across Hip-Hop (Kanye West, Lil Wayne, Future), R&B (Rihanna, Ciara, Kelly Rowland) and Pop (Miley Cyrus).

Then he embarked on a new chapter: music mogul. Partnering with Jimmy Iovine and Interscope Records, he introduced the world to two brothers from Tupelo, Mississippi as the first act out of Eardrummers Entertainment: Rae Sremmurd. Their 2015 debut *Sremmlife* produced five multi-platinum singles. Their 2016 follow-up *Sremmlife 2* yielded four more, including the chart-topping, 6x-platinum hit “Black Beatles”, which Mike WiLL produced. That same year he was behind the boards on “Formation,” the critically-acclaimed and Grammy-nominated lead single to Beyonce’s sixth studio album *Lemonade*, which she premiered at the Super Bowl 50 halftime show.

He scored his second Billboard #1 in 2017 with Kendrick Lamar’s “Humble”, which went on to win “Best Rap Song” a year later at the 60th Annual Grammy Awards. 2018 also saw Mike WiLL serve as executive producer on *Edgewood*, the critically acclaimed debut album from Atlanta rapper Trouble. He also made his foray into film when he was tapped to produce the soundtrack to the major motion picture Creed II.

“I started focusing on curating cohesive projects and less on separate songs. I wanted to create a whole world people would get lost in from start to finish. So even if you’ve never been to Edgewood you feel like you have.”

In 2019, at the peak of his powers, Mike WiLL Made-It’s hard drive was stolen. The loss of years of work would be cause for any creative to fall into a slump. Instead he took it as an opportunity to groom his stable of artists, producers and songwriters at Ear Drummers. His investment in the next generation of talent proved to be worthwhile. At the top of 2020 Ear-Drummers producer 30 Rocc landed his first Billboard #1 with Roddy Rich’s “The Box”.

Throughout his rise he’s demonstrated a commitment to giving back to his community through his Making Wishes Matter Foundation’s annual “Wish Week”, a week-long series of events to benefit Atlanta’s youth. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, his nonprofit organization partnered with Ludacris and a local sewing company to distribute 3,000 face masks to MARTA employees.

2020 also saw the super producer sign an exclusive worldwide publishing deal with Warner Chappell Music, the international publishing arm of Warner Music Group. While his catalogue may be going global but Mike WiLL Made It is still the same kid that was standing outside of Patchwerk Studios in ‘07. At that time he was trying to break into the industry. Now he’s spent the better half of the last decade ruling over it.

Up next is *Michael,* a potent 10-track compilation that embarks on a new chapter in an already storied career. His legacy may be set in stone but he’s still tinkering with the formula, pushing himself and his collaborators to new places.

“I’m going to give the people what they want but also what they never knew they needed,” he says. “Having vision is having the ability to see the unseen.”