

Aged just 31, Armin Van Buuren has been named number one in the prestigious DJ Top 100 poll – voted for by over 350,000 people across the world, and an indication of his prolific output over the 10 years he's been DJing and producing. Being the official World's Best DJ is just one of his many achievements, but the driving force behind his success is an overriding passion for dance music.

Even a basic list of recent successes reads like a lifetime of work: 'Best Album' for artist album "Shivers" at both the Dutch Release Dance Awards and the prestigious Edison Awards; 'Best Compilation' for "A State Of Trance", and 'Best Mix Radio Dutch Show' at the Miami Winter Music Conference 2006 for radio show 'A State Of Trance' – now broadcasting on a massive 40 FM stations as well as satellite and internet radio, with over 6 million listeners a week; a 5th year residency in Ibiza at Amnesia; sell-out shows for Armin Only (12,500 people saw the nine-and-a-half hour Rotterdam live set and show and a world tour is planned); over 50,000 downloads every week from podcasting high end chart-bothering positions all over the world for singles, albums and compilations, with single "Rush Hour" used as the theme tune to the UEFA European Youth Championship; a second DVD, 'Armin Only 'Ahoy 2006' – the landmarks just keep coming!

Born in Leiden, Holland (on December 25, 1976) to a musical family, Armin indulged his passion for music from a young age. He spent all the money he earned with his paper round on records. His mum won a computer when he was 10, "So as a little nerdy kid I was writing my own basic programs, and learnt about the technology from there." He progressed from making low-profile mix tapes for friends to higher profile mixes when he discovered experimenting with different sequences on his computer through his uncle. "I was so stunned by what I saw him doing on the computer, that I got addicted to creating music right there and then!"

"I loved dance music immediately – this great rebellious sound that was so different to the 'beautiful' songs of the years before". Armin cites electronic pioneer Jean Michel Jarre as a major influence (famed for his awesome visuals as well as his groundbreaking synth sounds), as well as Dutch producer Ben Liebrand, who later mentored him in his mixing and producing.

In the early days, Armin thought it was wise to have something extra in case the DJ'ing didn't work out. So he studied for a law degree. The final year of his course was inevitably stretched as he juggled his studies with his increasingly hectic schedule; his rise to fame included lots of productions and remixes, as well as playing out to packed clubs every weekend. It took him three years to graduate, but his determination made him succeed!

Armin's own productions have all made a huge impact with his last 12 singles hitting the Top 40 in Holland, and gaining worldwide acclaim. His back catalogue includes Blue Fear, Communication, Sound of Goodbye, Shivers, Rush Hour, Burned With Desire, Exhale, Love You More, This World Is Watching Me, and Yet Another Day. While the remix offers flood in, Armin only takes on tracks that he really loves. He uses exactly the same criteria for his compilations, meaning that every release from Armin or his long-running Armin label is a bone fide stunner that's earned its place. His output includes tracks for the cult TV series 24, and the likes of Motorcycle's When The Rush Comes.

Armin is a dedicated trance lover, but isn't imprisoned by a single genre, saying "What makes trance work so well is that it doesn't stick to one style, and can incorporate electro, minimal, whatever it likes." His desire to showcase more of the great music he hears, along with the number of people sending him tracks they wanted to release, led to the obvious step of starting his own label, Armada, in 2003.

The label is a joint venture between Armin, Maykel Piron (former head of A&R for Warner Music) and David Lewis, who'd previously managed Armin. "What we wanted was a company that could offer everything for an artist: representation, a booking agency, and a record company. Artists can choose full management, or to just release a record or play out at gigs. Armada lets the artists choose what they want without telling them what to do".

Armin is now a fully-fledged artist in his own right, having made his songwriting debut on his last album, the award-winning Shivers; and artist album three is in the pipeline... The events continue to get bigger and bigger, and Armin regularly headlines the likes of Sensation White, Global Gathering, Dance Valley, ZoukOut, Mysteryland, Coachella, Beats In Brazil, Trance Energy, Fort Dance, Summer Days, Dance Valley – basically whether you're in Australia, Russia, the Middle East, the US or Europe, you can catch Armin van Buuren at a club or festival near you!

"This is just what I really want," says Armin. "It's not just love for music, it's my passion. It goes beyond liking, and beyond a hobby, it's about a way of living. Music is essential to my life".