

SOFI TUKKER

SOFI TUKKER's success was anything but planned. The band's very existence happened haphazardly after Sophie Hawley-Weld met Tucker Halpern during an art show at Brown University, where they both happened to be performing. It only took a couple of months before the NYC-based duo penned their viral track "Drinkee", which has since been featured in an Apple Watch Ad, racked up over 20 million Spotify streams, and received a Grammy nomination for Best Dance Recording. The song was the first they ever wrote, and became the backbone of their wildly successful EP, *Soft Animals*.

"It wasn't really until the Apple commercial that people were like, 'Oh, you're in a band,'" Tucker recalls. He himself never had plans of actually working in music, having spent the first 20 years of his life striving to become a professional basketball player. After getting sick during his junior year of college, Tucker was bedridden for eight months—a stint he used to teach himself music production before returning to school to study it seriously. Sophie, on the other hand, had been singing in choirs and drumming in drum circles since middle school, where she also began writing original music. "It's been a dream of mine forever, though I didn't really admit it to myself," she recalls about becoming a musician. Coincidentally, Sophie also found herself injured and in a wheelchair for four months after college, though that didn't slow the pair's musical growth, as they collaborated during her convalescence.

"We Skyped almost every day," Sophie recalls. At the time, she was living in the Netherlands, one of the countless places she's inhabited after attending a slue of international schools and becoming what one may call a citizen of the world. This multicultural background is likely the reason she decided to sing in Portuguese, a language she studied in college. "I was drawn to it because of how melodic it is. I think it's extremely sexy," she explains. The success of "Drinkee" shows Sophie wasn't the only person with that opinion; the track reached the top of the Spotify and iTunes charts in Italy, Australia, Cyprus, Hungary, Turkey, Latvia, Costa Rica and more. It should also be mentioned that having a Grammy nominated track that's not in English (and from a band that has yet to even release a full LP) is no small feat—rather, it speaks to the band's

inherent talent and ability to attract audiences from a plethora of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Perhaps no one was more shocked than Sophie and Tucker themselves when they seamlessly transitioned out of the “emerging acts” grouping into worldwide recognition in the space of 12 months. Tucker recalls a festival they played in Mexico, where they were expecting to have a hundred or so people in the audience. Instead there were over 5,000 people waiting before they even got on stage, chanting their name.

While most acts might feel an onslaught of pressure after breaking through—knowing that they now have an audience of hundreds of thousands watching their every move—Sophie and Tucker are excited by the challenge. “We both work really well under pressure and I’m always so impressed by Tucker’s relentless work ethic,” Sophie notes. “Luckily we love what we do so it never feels like work. I also think the recognition actually gives us more freedom to go wild,” Tucker adds. “We like to go crazy.” That’s all to say that, despite the Grammy nom, over 20 million YouTube streams and an influx of love from various publications—*The Fader*, *Nylon*, *The New York Times* and *Noisey*, to name a few—the band doesn’t feel like they’ve exactly made it big. “Success isn’t somewhere that you just arrive at one day,” Sophie expresses. Tucker echoes similar sentiments: “We’re still the same young band trying to sell out little venues and have parties with people all over the world.”

The duo’s unprecedented success with their first EP has left countless fans anticipating their next collection of songs, which will combine a guitar-led edge with the playfulness and myriad of international influences that has made their current catalogue of songs attain such recognition. Having already gotten as close to cultural world domination as a young act can get, SOFI TUKKER’s future is looking brighter than ever.