

DARCUS BEESE - GRADUATION CEREMONY SPEECH TRANSCRIPT

HONORARY FELLOWSHIP AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH GIVEN AT THE 2013 FALMOUTH
UNIVERSITY GRADUATION CEREMONY

Transcript

"Wow; I did not expect that. A bit of a history lesson as well. I was going to introduce myself from my notes but I'm not going to introduce myself now. But what I would like to say is thank you to Rick Rogers, Geoff Smith, the Academy of Music and Theatre Arts. So much appreciated everyone, I'm humbled. I'm not going to cry, but I'm humbled. But also inspired by what I've seen today. Congratulations to the third year on your graduation, fantastic, especially the last two who have earned doctorates, amazing.

I got a chance to come up and it was around the time of when I got sole presidency of Island Records, and maybe it did go some way to getting the presidency of Island Records. And I'll carry on rocking the Falmouth colours for a long time now, so thank you very much. But when I was here, I mean the facilities, the staff, the support for the students here are second to none and you won't realise a good thing until it's gone. And what will you do when it has? Your ability and your passion is a given, that's not in question. But your work ethic will have to come into play, because as you enter the real world and seek out your fame and fortune and your careers, you will encounter frustrations and it's your work ethic that will get you through it. You will encounter obstacles and it's your work ethic that will get you over it. But it's imperative in whatever you do, whether you sing, you dance, you write songs, you produce, whatever it is, your talent's not in question; it's your work ethic that will get you over the line.

Also embrace the digital landscape, because you are now completely in charge of your own destiny. You don't need permission to exist, you have the keys now, I'm not the gatekeeper, you lot are the gatekeepers. For example, there were a list of acts that were read out, and you may not like them, they might not be to your taste, but they all existed before I came along, before my company signed them, before I signed them, they all existed before I came along. Jessie J, well, a year before I came along most of her material that was on her first album existed online, whether she was singing in her front room or whether she was in a rehearsal or whether she was at a gig, all of this stuff existed online. She embraced the digital age. Mumford and Sons, again, before I even came along, before my company turned up they were selling out shows, they were putting out their own records. Rizzle Kicks, I don't know if you've heard of them, but the first two singles were up online way before I even knew who the Rizzle Kicks were. Ben Howard, the same thing, I was turning up to sold out shows of his before we put the deal on the table. Bombay Bicycle Club. So it's important that now that you've been given the tools that you go out to the big bad world and you exist on your own terms, and it's not what people expect of you, but it's what you expect of yourself.

So I was planning a ten minute speech but half of it was taken out by Geoff. But again, I am seriously humbled and I am seriously inspired by what I've seen here today. I've been talking with Rick Rogers who brought me up here and has now got Falmouth under my skin, and I will

make sure that I will do my job and strengthen ties between Island Records and Falmouth University for years to come. And you won't be seeing the last of me. And I will be turning up without an appointment if that's okay. So again, I humbly thank you and respect to the graduates."