

September 8, 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

RE: Letter of Reference for Gabriel Vargas

I write to encourage your support of Gabriel Vargas in what is an extraordinary opportunity, both timely and deserved.

As Managing Director of Warner Music NZ (1994 – 2004), I was responsible for all facets of running a multi-national company. I signed and developed *The Feelers*, *Fur Patrol*, *Shihad*, *Anika Moa* and *Evermore*. I have a sales, marketing and promotions skill base and am now focused on the management of my artist roster. Some recent successes include the Top 5 album debut for *The Feelers'* album "Hope Nature Forgives," the No 1 chart debut for *Blacklistt's* self-titled album, and nationwide and International tours for *The Feelers*, *Blacklistt* and *Devilskin*.

I have known Gabriel since 2012 when his band supported *The Feelers* - New Zealand's premier rock band, whom I was managing at the time.

Since meeting, Gabriel has consistently demonstrated that he is as driven as he is passionate. In particular, I was impressed by his decision to advance as a solo artist and his vision of using music as a means to collaborate across cultures and genres.

I have been in touch with Gabriel regularly, providing support as a mentor and arranging networking opportunities. He has shown consistent progress on a clear path and utilized every opportunity he is afforded with diligence and graciousness.

I have no reservations in endorsing Gabriel as a musician and as a force for good.

I have listened to Gabriel's demo "In Another World" featuring *Ladysmith Black Mombazo* and believe there is nothing else quite like it in the current market. It's uniqueness, cross cultural collaboration and message, elevates it into a genre and class of its own.

The fact Gabriel is actively seeking the required financial support to ensure this project can go ahead proves a further representation of his tenacity and resolve.

Sincerley,

James Southgate