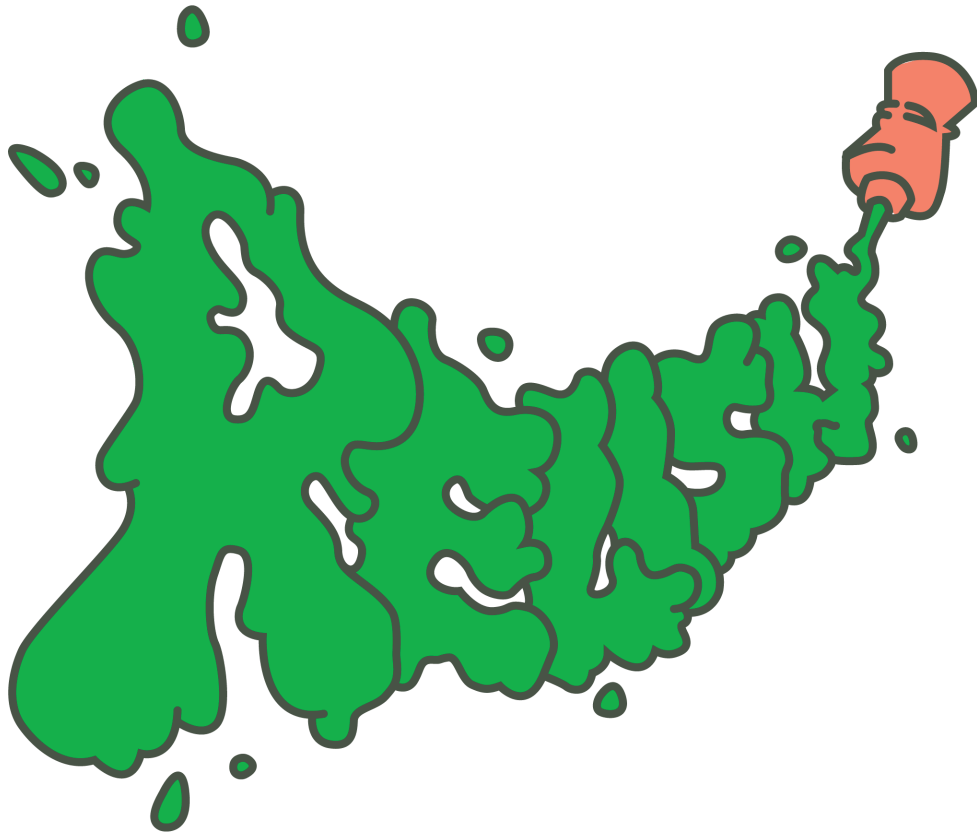




Volume I
December 2022



**FORDHAM'S
MULTIMEDIA
MUSIC PUBLICATION**

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the first issue of *RELISH*! *RELISH* is Fordham University's first multimedia music publication. At *RELISH*, we strive to provide a platform for Fordham students to create content dedicated to highlighting and appreciating the music scene at our university, within New York City, and beyond. In this issue, we hope to introduce you to Fordham student musicians, to highlight established artists within New York City, and to depict the various intersections between music and education, history, social justice, and life itself.

This issue is dedicated to David Wright, whose contributions to music journalism helped inspire the creation as well as the namesake of this publication. David and his brother started a small music publication in Maine after graduating college in the 1970s. Its name was *Sweet Potato*. *Sweet Potato* highlighted the Maine music scene and also covered an array of music artists and genres. Its popularity grew, and *Sweet Potato* was soon covering some of the biggest artists in the world, such as The New York Dolls, The Clash, and The Police. Starting with two brothers who had an idea, *Sweet Potato* expanded nationally and opened a couple of offices throughout the country. Although the publication was only around for a little over a decade, its impact still remains.

While brainstorming ideas for our university publication, we had a goal in mind to highlight student, up and coming, and established artists as successfully as David and *Sweet Potato* were able to throughout its years. Finding inspiration from the food-themed name of *Sweet Potato*, we picked *RELISH*. Not only is relish (arguably) a great condiment, but it also carries a lot of meaning. To *RELISH* means to enjoy, to savor, and to appreciate something. In our case, we hope that our members, writers, and readers are able to delve into the world of music, relishing in all aspects of the music scene (pun intended).

In order to relish in all aspects, we designed *RELISH* to be a multimedia publication. As a multimedia publication, students have the opportunity to create written, visual, and audio content, which can be found within our blog (relish.blog.fordham.edu) and within this magazine. We hope that student writers, producers, artists, photographers, graphic designers, and lovers of music will find a space to create at *RELISH*. For all interested students, we hold weekly meetings on Thursdays in Keating 218 at 4pm.

We are so happy students have already found a space to create at *RELISH* during our first semester. We hope that more students will continue to find a space at *RELISH*. As *RELISH* grows, we hope to continue to honor and draw inspiration from David Wright and *Sweet Potato*. David Wright passed this past August. We want to dedicate this issue in his memory, and we hope that *RELISH* will continue to grow and honor his legacy within music journalism and beyond.

Keep relishing,
Your Co-Editors in Chief
Kate Caperan & Maggie Peknic



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FORDHAM



Fordham PhD Student & Hip Hop Scholar: Diana Marino

By Kate Caperan

Diana Marino is an English PhD student at Fordham University. She is also a hip hop scholar who believes that hip hop culture and music should be incorporated into high school and college curriculum. In a sit down interview, Marino revealed her complex journey with hip hop, her experiences learning and teaching hip hop pedagogy, and how she hopes this culture can enhance people's lives in practice, appreciation, and education.

Growing up in the birthplace of hip hop, the South Bronx, it was natural for Marino to be exposed to various elements of hip hop culture. She described frequently seeing people in her neighborhood freestyling outside of bodegas and street corners as she would go about her daily routine. Even though she was surrounded by the elements of hip hop, Marino initially separated herself from the culture.

For most of her childhood and teenage years, Marino was steered away from hip hop culture by her parents. *"Quita esa porquería," "take that crap off,"* her mother insisted whenever she heard rap music. Marino's parents sheltered her from rap music and instilled a belief in Marino that her participation in rap music and hip hop culture would lead to consequences.

"As a kid I would think, oh, if I listen to hip hop music then I'm gonna get in trouble and get arrested like the young kids I saw getting arrested by cops, especially during the time of stop-and-frisk."

--Diana Marino

In the 2000s and early 2010s, stop-and-frisk reached its peak in New York City. During stop-and-frisk interrogations, the "New York City Police Department practice[d] temporarily detaining, questioning, and at times, searching civilians and suspects on the street for weapons and other contraband." Although stop-and-frisk numbers have decreased in recent years, predominately Black and Brown communities like the Bronx remain overwhelmingly affected by these interrogations.

So Marino steered clear of hip hop culture and rap music, appeasing her parents' wishes while also

upholding her personal belief that avoiding hip hop would keep her safe from harm.

But after Marino attended a semester-long high school program her junior year, her relationship with hip hop culture completely transformed. During this program, Marino attended a predominately white private school in Vermont. Marino felt incredibly alienated by her peers at this school, experiencing major culture shock at this small PWI, especially when rap music became involved in the mix.

Marino described instances where white students would sing along to rap songs, rapping racial slurs and spewing lyrical content without "knowing the struggles behind [the lyrics]." Marino decided that when she returned home to the South Bronx after this program, she would finally embrace hip hop culture, starting with the element of freestyling.

Marino started freestyling at her Bronx high school. She freestyled with students, particularly with her male peers, in her high school's cafeteria. Marino described much of her early freestyle experiences as "roast sessions," where those involved in the roast would poke fun, or roast each other, utilizing clever rhymes and stingingly targeted digs.



Courtesy of Professor Mark Naison

If you aren't familiar with roasts (which I'm assuming, is highly unlikely), the iconic Supa Hot Fire (OHHHHH) pictured below should spark your memory.



Marino's passion for hip hop culture continued throughout her college years. Attending university in rural Indiana, Marino discovered midwest rap artists like Chance the Rapper and Noname, some of her greatest inspirations to this day.

She also continued freestyling, this time at kickbacks. These freestyle sessions were different from high school. At this rural predominately white institution, Marino's friends were of different races, gender identities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. In college, she described freestyling as a way to find unity amongst the differences in her friends and peers, while of course also having a good time.

Marino also embraced hip hop culture in her studies. One class in particular has stayed with Marino throughout her academic career and in her personal life, "Religion and Culture in Hip Hop," with Professor James Logan. James Logan is a PhD Professor of Religion and African American Studies, and like Marino, he is also from the Bronx.

Logan incorporated hip hop culture into his teaching through the utilization of hip hop pedagogy. Hip hop pedagogy is defined as "the authentic and practical incorporation of hip hop's creative elements and sensibilities into teaching and learning." With Professor Logan, Marino learned for the first time that hip hop could be incorporated into academic curriculum and that "it didn't have to be what people perceived it [as]; as something derogatory."

"There's actually fundamental art and beauty within the art form and scholarship itself. And it's so beautiful." - DM

Inspired by Professor Logan, Marino discovered that she herself wanted to become a teacher and implement hip hop pedagogy into her teaching style.

After finishing her undergraduate studies in 2019, Marino started teaching at the rural Vermont school where she spent a high school semester, the same school where she felt alienated and disconnected from her classmates and from the South Bronx. At this school, Marino was ready to be there for the few students of

color enrolled, acting as a resource she did not have when she attended.

As the youngest and newest staff member, Marino began fighting for more inclusive race-based curriculum, which was not an easy battle. Marino ended up volunteering her time every Saturday to hold a seminar class where she would incorporate hip hop pedagogy into her teaching. Marino's seminar was so sought after that the entire student body, which consisted of 45 students, ended up attending.

During the height of the Black Lives Matter protests after the murder of George Floyd, the Vermont school student body held a strike, demanding the incorporation of Marino's class into the school's official academic curriculum. The students were successful, and by the class's second semester in session, it was an official high school class. Marino became the Vermont school's first African and African American Studies teacher. Moreover, Marino no longer had to come in on Saturdays. Her course was now held three times a week: on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

Currently, Marino is working to get her PhD in English at Fordham University, studying to become a professor. Marino hopes to reshape and expand Fordham's English curriculum, incorporating hip hop pedagogy into her teachings, just as she had learned in college and just as she had implemented into the curriculum at the Vermont school.

Marino was able to put these teachings to work at Fordham when she guest lectured in Professor Mark Naison's Bronx class earlier this semester. During her lesson, Marino delved into hip hop pedagogy and even got some members of the class to freestyle.

"Once you have a conversation about uncomfortable topics [using] freestyle, you also talk about and discover the disparities that a lot of people have to go through... Freestyle is all about the struggle and talking about your life and the struggle." - DM

Marino described Naison's class as a way for students from all different backgrounds to creatively share their opinions and life experiences. Through freestyling, topics ranging from food to religion, privilege, and struggle were covered in the class.

Marino views hip hop culture and pedagogy as tools to allow anyone to be authentic to themselves and to others. From this shared authenticity, Marino believes it will be easier for people from different backgrounds to connect, allowing for a much more impactful discussion when discussing topics of race in and out of the classroom. As a future English professor, Marino is ready to begin intersecting rap and poetry into the English Department, creating a space for hip hop pedagogy at Fordham. Hopefully in the near future, Fordham students will be able to take a course with Professor Marino.

Crotona:live @Rods

Words By Maura Mulvihill
Photos By Henry Sullivan

Crotona Avenue is a street just off of Fordham Road. Head a couple of blocks past Belmont Avenue; stop before you hit the Bronx Zoo, and you'll find it. Crotona Avenue shares a name with a high school, a park, and now Fordham's newest band who made their live debut on November 18th at Rodrigue's Coffee House, opening for headlining band Smushie

When I sat down with one of Crotona's guitarists Áine Mullaly, I was eager to get to the bottom of the band's backstory. I decided to start by asking about the band's name. In inquiring about the name, I learned a little bit of history about Fordham's music scene. Mullaly started off by telling me about her super impressive capstone research project, in which she is creating an archive of Fordham's house and DIY music venue scene over the course of the last 3 decades. In her research, she came across a now-defunct venue, lovingly referred to as the "Meat Shop," that booked an impressive lineup of bands, including names you might know like Soccer Mommy and Diet Cig, in the 2010s.

The "Meat Shop" – it was in the basement of an apartment located on Crotona Avenue. Áine said when naming the band, "It was so hard to figure out something that we didn't hate after like, a day, but Crotona we liked a lot, and it's kinda inspired by that".

Áine talked a lot about these basement shows and how they really served as part of the inspiration for the formation of the band. She said, "My favorite experiences at Fordham as a freshman and sophomore were going to the Thunderdome, because it felt like a secret, but all my friends would be there." The "Thunderdome" refers to another Fordham basement venue, the Jurassic Thunderdome, which has since also become a thing of the past. I remember going to a couple of Jurassic Thunderdome shows myself, and I think Áine is right when

she says we really don't have much of anything like that at Fordham anymore. She says that to her and other members of the band, Crotona "is our way of getting back to that."

Áine says that her and lead vocalist Meghana Goli have talked about forming a band together since their freshman year in 2019. Momentum to form a band grew when Áine and bassist Annika Haakonsen began writing songs together in January of 2022. Together, Goli, Haakonsen, and Mullaly started writing and playing music through the winter and spring. But they were missing a drummer.

In the fall of this year, the three reached out to drummer Aidan Drouse and guitarist Hugo Keith (you might recognize them as members of another Fordham student band, Faculty). All together, they played "Butter", that first song written by Mullaly and Haakonsen the previous winter, liked the way it sounded, and decided to come together to create what is now Crotona.

Leading up to the concert, Drouse and Keith were a comforting presence to the other members of the band as seasoned performers. Áine says she was nervous, but not because she doubted the band. The anxiety came from not knowing what an audience would bring to performing. "It is a little jarring to go up in front of people and look them in the eye when you're playing something you wrote."

That first song they ever wrote and played together, "Butter" would become the very first song they ever played for a live audience. In addition, Crotona played a mix of originals and covers, including another original song titled "Allen Wang" and covers of "Sports" by Viagra Boys and "Hold On We're Going Home" by Drake.

Waiting for the performance, I really didn't know what to expect, but I was excited. To say I enjoyed it was an understatement. Every member of the band seriously impressed me. It is so amazing to watch people you know



perform and even better to watch them completely knock it out of the park. To be honest, one of my favorite parts of their set was the Drake cover, partly because of all the ways they made it their own. It was such a cool feeling being able to sing along to a band at their first live performance.

After the show, Áine says she and the band are ready to keep performing. "It makes me want to do more, because I think we've worked really well together as a band, and we all care equally about what is going on. I just want to see how far we can take this in terms of what we can write... We're not doing this to get big; it's just so fun to play music with your friends."

You can watch Crotona for yourself at upcoming basement shows around Belmont.



Sound Engineering for Small Venues, House Shows, and DIY Events

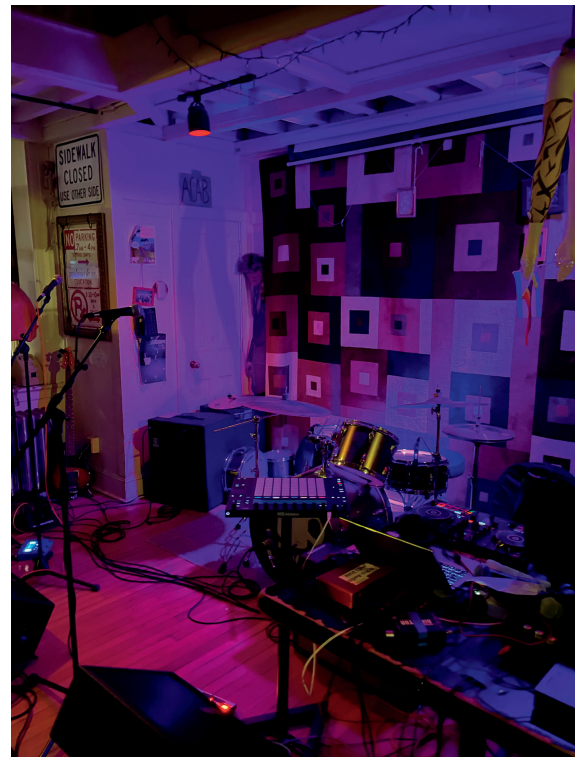
By Allen Wang

As the sound engineer at Rodrigue's Coffee House, the main responsibilities I have are to set up all the sound equipment that's required for a live show and then mix the band during their performance. Although this process is pretty dynamic and volatile from the variety of bands that come to play, it can be explained in several steps.

Before any setup for a Rodrigue's concert occurs, we communicate with the bands that are performing to confirm what equipment they need, among other technical details for the performance. This can be communicated through a tech sheet, which can also be referred to as a backline sheet. This document explains what equipment a venue owns, so that bands know what they should and shouldn't bring. I also ask bands for an input list and stage plot if they have that information available to get a better understanding of their normal setup.

During the day of the show, setup begins several hours before the band goes on. First, the sound team and I move the cafe furniture outside of the building. Rodrigue's normally functions as a student-run coffee shop, so we have to rearrange the layout of the room to make space for an audience. After the room is arranged, we set up the stage by building together the main PA speakers and stage monitors. After the main parts of the sound system are put into place, we set up the "front of house" (FOH) area, which is usually located behind the cafe counter on the side opposite of the stage area. This is where I operate the sound console and where I spend most of my time during a show. Once all of the equipment at FOH is dialed in to a default setup, I do a quick test of the sound system by playing a few songs that I know pretty well. Listening to these reference tracks through the sound system allows me to quickly check if all the speakers are working properly or if anything sounds out of place.

Following this first phase of the setup process, we proceed by setting up the backline equipment. This includes the drum set, bass amplifiers, guitar amplifiers, and other equipment that is requested by the band.



Rods is fortunate to have a good backline inventory for a venue of its size, and this allows for artists to travel to us with less gear. After the backline has been set up, I mic all the inputs that I need for the show. I do this based on an input list that I make before the show, detailing the inputs I need, its patching, the type of microphone, and the type of microphone stand. The normal set of inputs I use include kick drum, snare drum, bass, guitar, and vocal mics. Occasionally, bands will bring in keyboards, woodwinds, brass instruments, and other less-ubiquitous instruments like the theremin. Microphones are assigned based on the sound characteristics of the instrument. For example, the microphone used for the kick drum is designed differently than a microphone for a guitar or vocals. I normally use 10 to 12 nputs per show, and I tend to mic everything for a full-sounding live mix. After the mics and their stands have been placed, the band can load in their equipment and begin to soundcheck.

The process of soundcheck is designed to dial in all of the sound settings for each microphone or input. There is a fine line between taking your time to dial in these settings and perfecting the sound of each input. The time allocated for soundcheck is meant to dial in a basic mix for the show and should be done in an efficient and methodical manner. I tend to start the check with vocal mics, which are arguably the most important part of any concert. Then I check the rest of the instruments and set up the monitor mixes for the performers. I also ask the bands to play parts of different songs to check that the settings I have chosen to use match their style of music and performance.

Once all of the bands are soundchecked (usually done in the reverse order of performance order), there is some downtime before the performance. This time can be used to tie up any other loose ends before the show, or to just relax. When the show begins, I mix the band and monitor the sound console throughout the show. I also add additional effects and processing over the course of the show to enhance the band's sound. My two signs of a good sounding mix for myself is if the vocal lies on top of the entire mix and if all of the instruments are intelligible and clear. For example, I like having a deep sounding bass guitar and a moderately compressed sounding guitar.

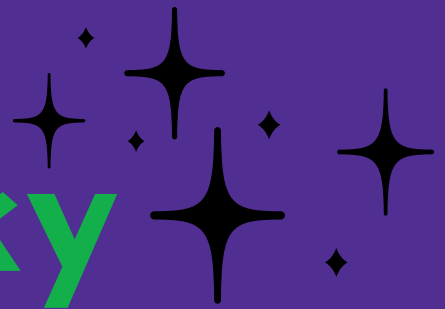
The process of sound engineering for a show is meticulous and requires attention to detail, but it results in a great musical experience for both the audience and venue staff. I think my team and I enjoy our jobs because of all of the opportunities we have to interact with bands and musicians from different places and genres of music. We also have a great appreciation for music and how a performance depicts the character of bands and their music.



30 Minutes With

dj bumrokky

By Eliana Gruvman



"DJs are false gods," Cat Both says to me as she drinks a peppermint chocolate latte. (She very kindly offered me the first sip). She's wearing a UNIQLO thermal and a skirt that I want to borrow. Her mug is covered in polka dots and exclaims "evil genius." I'd have to agree with it. Cat, or DJ bumrokky, is an evil DJ genius.

As a child growing up near Philadelphia in a "really vertical house," Cat fell down the stairs a lot, á la the titular Rocky of the lauded Rocky trilogy. "You're a bum, Rocky" her father would say, a phrase that was quickly shortened into bumrokky and transformed into her DJ moniker. Cat has been creating music since she was fourteen, eager to find an outlet and find community with other young musicians. In high school, she formed the band mucus membrane, learning how to produce and perform.

Arriving at Fordham University, Cat found herself drawn more to techno and DJ sets, especially with the guidance of her "DJ Sensei" (which, by the way, is a fantastic phrase and how I would like to be referred to from now on), DJ ColdSteel. There's a difference, Cat explained, between performing your own creative work and deejaying, looping and manipulating the creative work of others.

As a DJ, she clarified, "you're an idol." It's different from the personal, ultra-vulnerable act performing your own music. Playing your own creations, you're at the mercy of the crowd's preferences, of their opinions. To Cat, the absence of vulnerability is the appeal of deejaying. It's a form of art where you don't have to reveal anything, where you're in control. "People will dance and, if not, it's not that big of a deal," she laughs.

I was curious. How do you make this transition from sacrifice to idol? What's the first thing you have to learn?

Well, Cat reflected, you have to learn a lot of songs. The most important thing is to find and amplify what people want to listen to.

Of course, I then had to ask, what do people want to listen to?

It turns out that people want the Big Three: throwbacks from the 2000s (I totally agree), Big Booty Beats, and hardcore house with heaving drums and heavy bass. People want to hear what they are used



to, beats that they can follow. Cat loops and mixes as her set progresses, following the energy of the crowd. She respects that deejaying is fluid, remarking, "you can't plan it out because you don't know how people are going to react." We try and make a metaphor out of the DJ and the crowd representing the X and Y variable on a graph, but neither of us remember eighth grade Earth Science enough to fully flesh out this metaphor.

Cat herself loves 90s techno and dub step. She loves to discover new music, to incorporate the creations of her friends and the new music developing on the New York scene into her sets. When I ask for an example, she plays me a "crazy song," screamo over a pounding beat. "It's the kind of song I wish I could play at Barnyard. I know that not everything is a joke, but I just want everything to be silly."

All joking aside, Cat was the first female DJ to ever play the famed local watering hole The Barnyard BBQ. That's an accomplishment that, honestly, cannot be overstated. Simon even gave her not one, not two, but three hugs!

"Woman power is awesome," Cat adds as we finish the interview. "If a girl starts DJing, I will teach her, I will show her what to do," Cat adds. Barnyard, get ready.

Catch bumrokky at Grandpa's basement (Pugstini optional), hopefully back at the Yard, or at various house shows around campus.



Rods Open Mic Night

By Maura Mulvihill

The Rods x Relish Open Mic Night was a sight to behold. With raindrops bouncing off the windows and the old rickety heating units making mysterious sounds, it felt like mother nature was waiting to hop on the mic herself. With the room illuminated by string lights and an audience watching from behind the counter, draped over couches, or huddled on the floor, the room is welcoming to performers of all kinds.

First up was Diana Paradise performing a cover of "Swan Dive" by Waxahatchee. One thing I love about open mics is all the new songs I get to hear! I have seen Diana perform at Rods's open mics before and trust me...they never disappoint. With beautiful vocals accompanied by their playing on the piano, it was a subtle but beautiful beginning to the night.

Next, with a COMPLETELY different vibe, was Relish's very own Alan C. Ventura. Alan took a seat behind the mic and began to freestyle rap! My mind was blown. Alan's mind was moving faster than I could type, so somehow the only line of his I was able to recollect was, "Feed em vegan beef and fries," a line that had the audience laughing and gasping all at once.

Following Alan came an open mic regular, a one man act who goes by "Lavas Las Manos." Lavas Las Manos is a self-described reggaeton singer who performs both covers and original pieces. First, he performed a cover of "Touch Me" by The Doors. Keep in mind, this is reggaeton music, people. He translated the whole song into Spanish and created his own backtrack, while still paying homage to the original song. Next he performed an original song that also featured his own backtrack with relaxing thunder and sitar samples. Lavas Las Manos is always original and fun to watch!

Next up was a member of the Fordham Hot Notes! Tony Cuellar covered Taylor Swift's "You're On Your Own Kid," completely a capella!

This open mic night just happened to be on the first day of ticket sales for Swift's upcoming tour, so I found the song choice to be very on the nose. Cuellar's amazing, deep voice gave the audience a new spin on the song and left me wanting to buy tickets to Swift's concert myself! Or... at least the next Hot Notes's showcase.

Next on the mic was Liz Shim, who really set the mood with a cover of "All I Want for Christmas is You" by Mariah Carey. Shim really knows how to hit the high notes and had the audience cheering by the end of the song! She had me looking forward to Christmas even more. Liz also records her own original music! Check out some of her new songs on Spotify!

Nearing the end of the show, Samuel Parker performed two songs for the audience. First was an original he wrote called, "The Language of Love." Parker played guitar and sang his super sweet lyrics about all the different ways we can love each other. Rods's president Beckett Zinn-Rowthorn told me this song inspired him to do some self-reflection, and he is finally ready to admit that his love language is "antique coins!" Next, Parker performed a cover of Billy Joel's "Piano Man," which, with his combined impressive piano and harmonica playing, was a real crowd pleaser!

Finally, to end the night was another open mic regular, Bruno Pruhs, performing an original song he wrote that very morning! Pruhs played intricate guitar rhythms and sang his original Spanish lyrics for a short but sweet ending to the night.

The Relish x Rods collab was the perfect combination of everything I love about an open mic night. There was such a variety of music and performers, old and new! Rods's open mics are a great opportunity to perform music, get to know some of Fordham's student artists, or just hang with friends and watch some free tunes! Hope to see you all at the next one!

An Interview with YallaDrizzy & MyBravo

By Josh Atlas

Finding friends as a freshman is never easy. For almost everyone, it begins with matching personalities and interests. I went through two friend groups before I finally found my current roommates: Driss Zaim-Sassi and Nick Bravate. I met Nick during the first week of school, and we instantly connected over his Kids See Ghosts t-shirt. But it wasn't until three months later that I would meet him again and we would become friends. That was the same night I met Driss, and there they played me one of their first songs. Since then, I've been fortunate enough to see them both grow as artists.

Driss and Nick, who go by the stage names YallaDrizzy and MyBravo respectively, released their debut album *A Ghost City* on June 18th of this year, and have both recently released solo EPs. I sat down with them to talk about their recent work, creative process, and next steps as artists.

Josh: So, how did you guys meet each other?

Driss: Basically, we met last year as residents in Loyola Hall as neighbors in rooms 315 and 313. Somehow we just got put next to each other coincidentally, and we became friends soon after moving in. Crazy that two music artists just happened to be right next to each other.

Nick: Yeah, that's where it all started.

Josh: When you first met each other, was it instantly like, "Let's make a song together?"

Nick: Actually not really. It kinda started with the sentiment that we should work together at some point, but it took a little bit until we actually started working on music.

Driss: Technically, our first time making a song was over Discord after I made a melody in the first couple weeks of school, and Nick told me to send it to him.

Nick: It's funny 'cause one of the first times he asked to make music was when we both still hadn't made many friends, and I completely denied him.

Driss: Yeah, he just flat-out said no.

Nick: Politely said no.

Driss: I even told my mom. *laughs*

Josh: So at what point did you guys decide, "We're gonna make music together," beyond just sharing things you worked on?

Driss: We made a song called "Fallacy."

Nick: You'll never hear it.

Driss: That was maybe in late October or November, and that was the first time we really put our minds together to make something.

Josh: Going off of that, where do you find the intersection between your styles?

Nick: It's kind of hard to answer 'cause there isn't.

Driss: Yeah, I mean, we have two completely separate styles, but when we come together, we make a single sound that we both...it's kind of like taking two different ideas and creating—forming something new.

Josh: I feel like on *A Ghost City* there had to be inspirations that you both had to make an album like that.

Nick: One of the five or six people that listened to it.

Driss: I think when we started to make that project we both wanted to make something.



Driss: I think when we started to make that project we both wanted to make something along the lines of “a grand but also digital-sounding project.” We had a reference board, and we definitely had *Blade Runner* on there.

Nick: Yeah, definitely, both the original and 2049. Also, Daft Punk, in general, and their work on *Tron*. There’s just something about all of those soundtracks that really inspired us, and the love for those movies brought us together in the beginning. They stand out not only as music in the movies but as something entirely on their own. When you listen to them, it creates a world in your head through their atmospheric electronic sounds.

Josh: Could you ever see yourselves wanting to score a movie?

Nick: Yeah, that's a big dream of mine.

Driss: Definitely something I want to do later on.

Josh: So how does being at Fordham and being in NYC inspire the music you make?

Driss: I’ve definitely had teachers that have inspired me—even if it hasn't really reflected on *A Ghost City* or the EP, that's completely different. There’s definitely an inspiration in the things I hear and what we talk about in class on the music I make now.

Nick: Everything in the city inspires me. It’s part of the reason we’re here.

Driss: The environment, the people, the culture.

Nick: Going back to the earlier questions, we first bonded over that if nothing else. Coming to the city to get that experience, the reason we’re both here. Walking around any of the boroughs, seeing art, different people, and the experiences we’re having gives me ideas that I take back to my music.

Josh: How would you define your music, or is there no point in defining it?

Driss: I don’t like to define it ‘cause that limits you, but if I had to...

Nick: If he has to.

Driss: How about you take this question?

Nick: I couldn't say a genre, that just doesn’t make sense to me. Definition is different than genre, and I don’t think genre matters. By definition, we can tie a lot of characteristics. We use a lot of electronics and synths, which create a specific sound.

Driss: When you put it in a box it's hard to get out of that box.

Josh: What was the process behind your two recent EPs you both dropped when you got back to school? Was most of that worked on and inspired by the

summer?

Nick: Something like that. Mine I made for fun; I made it all in one night and wanted to put it out before I got to school, and my entire workflow got messed up. When working on that stuff, it's a very different process than the album. We’re not in person for any of those songs, so it changes how you work, making it easier and harder. The limitations of online work definitely makes it harder, but it causes you to get more creative.

Josh: How do you work online?

Driss: We use an online platform to send stuff back and forth. Online we kind of sample each other by sending melodies and stuff that we like, while in person you make that entire thing from scratch bouncing off each other's ideas. It’s a completely different workflow.

Josh: Last question, what do you guys want to accomplish in the next year?

Driss: Ideally, I’d love to improve on my sound, really make something specific to me.

Nick: Personally I want to completely change it up, make something entirely new together. I also really want to feel like I’m building a real fanbase of people all brought together through my music. Also, maybe live shows.

Driss: New music soon.

Listen to *A Ghost City*, out now on all streaming services, and follow @MyBravo and @YallaDrizzy on Instagram to keep up with them.



A Ghost City Album Cover

BRONX

Universal Hip Hop Museum

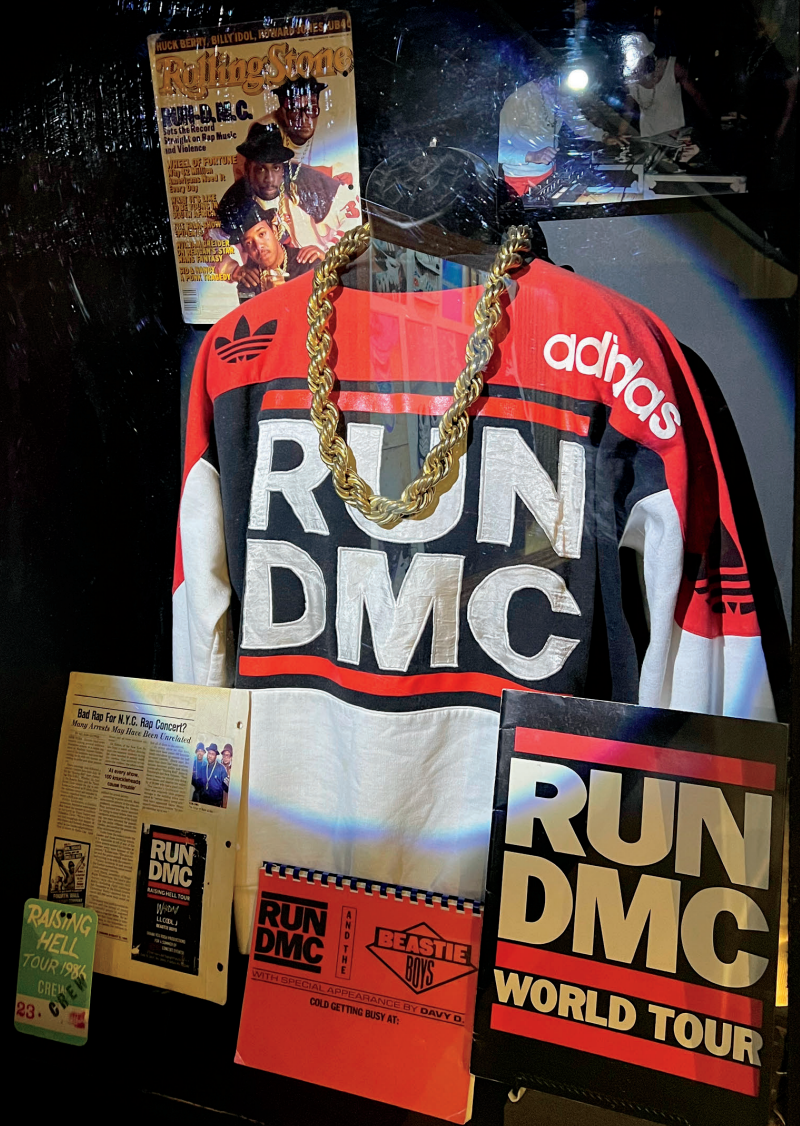
By Maggie Peknic

Located in the South Bronx, the Universal Hip Hop Museum's mission is to "celebrate and preserve the history of local and global Hip Hop to inspire, empower, and promote understanding." Currently on display is the [R]Evolution of Hip Hop: Golden Era 1986-1990.

This is the museum's third exhibit. The first one focused on the 1970s, depicting the origins of hip hop and highlighting its founders, including artists Grandmaster Melle Mel, Kurtis Blow, and Afrika Bambaataa. The second exhibit then shifted to focus on the years 1980-1985, in which hip hop music videos and national tours surfaced. The third exhibit has now pivoted to hip hop's golden era, 1986-1990. It depicts how "hip hop expanded by leaps and bounds as regional sounds and styles established themselves."

The [R]Evolution of Hip Hop: Golden Era 1986-1990 hosts a plethora of musical artifacts. Adidas sneakers and track suits worn by RUN DMC members, Beastie Boys's concert flyers, and Public Enemy's medallion are just some of the hip hop memorabilia displayed throughout the exhibit. Visitors can also view various mixtapes, magazines, comics, and even an oversized boombox that reaches the ceiling.

The museum breathes life into these 'ancient' artifacts through technology. Next to the display case of nearly all the memorabilia are headphones. Put the headphones on, and you'll hear either a song, a documentary, or the artist himself describing what's on display. There's also a subway cart where you can virtually spray paint your own graffiti.



Run DMC memorabilia on display at the [R]Evolution of Hip Hop The Golden Era: 1986-1990 exhibit.

RUN-DMC
1987
Tour Program
1987
RUN-DMC
Tour Program
1987
RUN-DMC
Raising Hell
Backstage
1986
RUN-DMC
Rolling Stone
1986
RUN, LL
Damonian
1988
BILLBOARD
Scrapbook
1986

"Hip hop itself is a sonic culture, meaning it's the music, it's the downbeat, that drives the whole culture."



The museum's Director of Marketing and Visitor Services, Reggie Peters, notes the importance of utilizing modern technology within the museum, "Hip hop has been innovative and forward-thinking. To this generation, in terms of hip hop or even just communicating in general, it's sacrilegious to ignore the value of technology."

The museum's modern technology mimics hip hop's innovative nature. It also allows for visitors to engage in the music. "The whole thing with our museum is we want participation," Peters said. "We don't want it to be dormant. We want it to be living and breathing." One way to participate: spin records with guest DJs. Local DJs play at the exhibit on weekends, allowing guests the opportunity to spin records and try their breakdancing skills.

Visitors will be able to experience this immersive participation within the finished museum. Currently, the [R]Evolution of Hip Hop exhibit is on display across the block from the museum, which is currently under construction and is set to open in 2024.

The museum will also be in the metaverse, allowing for global participation. The metaverse will host a prototype of the museum along with performance spaces, nightclubs, and chat rooms.

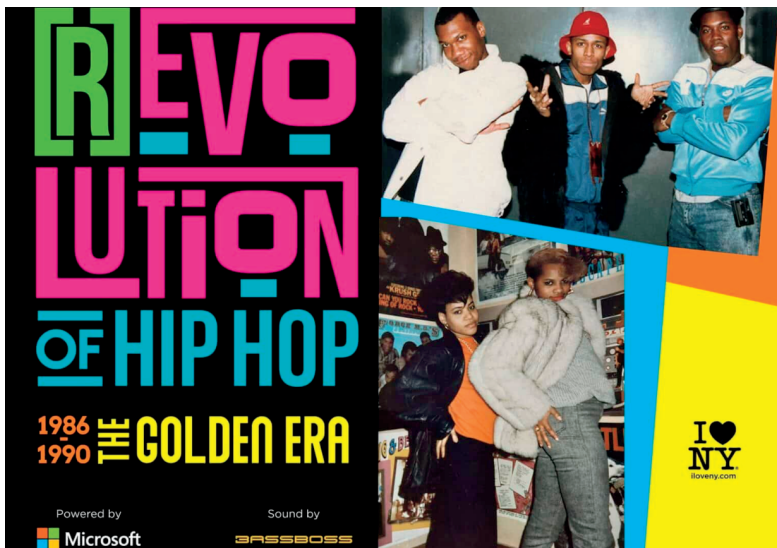
The technology will help the museum highlight the five pillars of hip hop: djing, emceeing, breakdancing, graffiti, and knowledge. "Hip hop itself is a sonic culture based on art, meaning it's the music, it's the downbeat, that drives the whole culture," Peters stated as he described the five pillars. "From that downbeat, you get the dance; you get the MC. The artist brought the fashion element and the creative design element to the walls, to the floors, to the clothing. All of that history and culture of what we did and how we did it has to be documented and retaught to the next generation, so they stay close to the roots."

While each element is vital to hip hop, Peters believes knowledge is the most important pillar. One of the museum's purposes is to act as a "think tank." The museum not only displays hip hop knowledge but actively teaches hip hop to future generations. This past summer, the museum held a Business of Music Institute Summer Camp for youth in grades 9-12. Additionally, the museum recently held Hip Hop Science panels. The panels "explored and celebrated scientific innovation, creativity, and the supreme mathematics that live in Hip Hop."

The museum hopes its programs will act as a way to engage with the community's youth and guide them in their hip hop journeys. Peters described hip hop's impact on youth, "Hip hop is a great story in itself. It's not the most easiest path to take. But for a kid coming out of the inner city with limited opportunities, this is one thing that is easily accessible to them and with the proper guidance, they can turn it into something to the level of Jay Z or a Diddy or a Kanye West. It's doable. It's realistic. And it's within one's grasp with the right guidance."

Peters hopes these programs along with the museum as a whole will "turn New York City into the Nashville of hip hop." While other hip hop museums exist, none exist in hip hop's birthplace of the Bronx. Peters says the museum's opening is long past overdue. He says, "It's a chance for the neighborhood to tell its own story and take its rightful place in history."

While the museum is set to open in 2024, visitors can still check out the [R]Evolution of Hip Hop: The Golden Era 1986-1990 exhibit at 610 Exterior Street, Bronx.



[R]Evolution of Hip Hop The Golden Era: 1986-1990 poster via UHHM.

The finished museum hopes to expand upon the exhibit's immersive technology. The 50,000-square-foot-space will host a 3D theater for movie presentations, panel discussions, and performances. Along the walls and ceiling will be 3D photos and holograms. "I would love to see what a high school kid would say when he sees 20,000 hip hop photos in one file, where he can get information about each photo at the touch of a button," Peters said. "There's all sorts of technology we're going to have to make it like Disney World."

BOROUGHHS

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN IS HARRY'S HOUSE

By Alana Saucier

Reigning pop artist Harry Styles made history on September 21, 2022, as he sold out 15 consecutive nights at the legendary venue, Madison Square Garden. On the 15th night of his very own residency, he was presented with a banner to display his success, which will reside in the Garden permanently.

He is one of three artists to receive a banner, as his name now hangs next to Billy Joel and Phish. In the midst of his 15-night residency, Joel played MSG and acknowledged Harry's accomplishments by saying, "I just want to thank Harry Styles for taking the night off."

After completing his European leg for the year-long and still running 'Love on Tour,' Harry made his way back to New York in less than a year. He decided to continue his never-ending tour to present his new album, Harry's House, by doing residency shows in Toronto, New York, Austin, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Harry made his last show in New York special by singing "Ever Since New York" from his first solo album back in 2017, which was not on the original setlist.

The MSG staff and team say they have never quite seen anything like this before and that Harry Styles fans are simply different than others. The energy and dedication the fans bring to Madison Square Garden is a significant factor in the success of the residency. It's no secret Harry has his very own unique, flashy style, consisting of sequins, bright colors and patterns, and of course, feather boas. Because of this, it's an unspoken rule that when attending 'Love on Tour,' one wears their most Harry-like outfit. The streets outside of the Garden were coated in feathers for weeks during and after the residency.

Over the course of the 15 nights, fans were camped outside of the Garden in tents and blankets for nights in hopes of getting as close as they could to Harry during the show. MSG holds about 20,000 people a night, and all 15 nights were completely sold out. The Garden was bursting with passionate Harry Styles fans, but a few



recognizable people also made appearances. Madonna, Hailey Bieber, Nina Dobrev, Drew Barrymore, Joe Jonas, Jon Bon Jovi, and many more familiar faces were spotted singing along with the fans. This dedication and passion that is displayed not just throughout the residency but also throughout the past decade from the fans (or "Harries") are what makes each one of his shows so special. Each show would carry the hope that Harry would play his unreleased song "Medicine," which was only sung on occasion. Chanting and anticipating the return of the unreleased masterpiece was one of the many things that united the fans at shows. Of course, there has always been a large community of Harry Styles fans across the globe, but this residency gave fans a chance to exist in a community right within New York. Most fans attended multiple shows and would meet friends and recognize people that they met at previous shows.

Going to Madison Square Garden became a weekly routine for New York fans in the month of September, which allowed for Madison Square Garden to be not only home to Harry Styles but to his fans as well. Reigning pop artist Harry Styles made history on September 21, 2022, as he sold out 15 consecutive nights at the legendary venue, Madison Square Garden. On the fifteenth night of his very own residency, he was presented with a banner to display his success, which will reside in the Garden permanently.



KING PRINCESS TAKES OVER RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

By Meghan Mahaffey
& Molly Chamberlain

As best friends, roommates, and the perfect concert-going pair, it is with pleasure that we recount our experience at our fifth concert together, King Princess at Radio City Music Hall on October 3rd. King Princess, or Mikaela Straus, is an artist from Brooklyn, New York. In describing herself she writes via Instagram, "I'm not a girl, not quite a boy. A lesbian, but also gay as the day is long. I'm not one thing." Her fluid identity rings loudly throughout her work, appealing to her adolescent audience. Repeatedly throughout her set, Straus made it known that this was a dream come true as the show flipped her role from spectator to performer in the iconic concert hall.

There's nothing better than hearing your favorite artists and songs live and embracing the lore of standing in a sweaty crowd to do so. So, it was only natural that on the drive home from seeing Phoebe Bridgers this summer, we bought tickets for the King Princess concert at Radio City. If I'm being honest, Radio City is not my favorite venue to see a concert. The seats mess with my dancing and make the concert feel a bit more formal. I prefer standing room or general admission, but I don't make the rules of where each concert takes place. We have seen one other show at Radio City, Clairo, and we both felt the venue was perfect for an artist like her. The soft yellow lighting paired well with her quiet, yet heartbreaking, melodies; I couldn't picture this concert occurring anywhere else.

However, King Princess didn't exactly fit the mold that Clairo did. Although Radio City may not have been her scene, King Princess took on the assignment (drunkenly) and surpassed our expectations, breaking the mentioned boundaries that Radio City as a concert venue holds. King Princess ran onto the stage, White Claw in hand, but not before drag queen Pissi Myles gave us a warm welcome. Singing Elton John's "The Bitch Is Back," she got the crowd energized for the show. KP's setlist included classics like "Talia," "1950," "Upper West Side" (shoutout Lincoln Center), and "Pussy is God," mixed with new material from her latest album *Hold on Baby*.

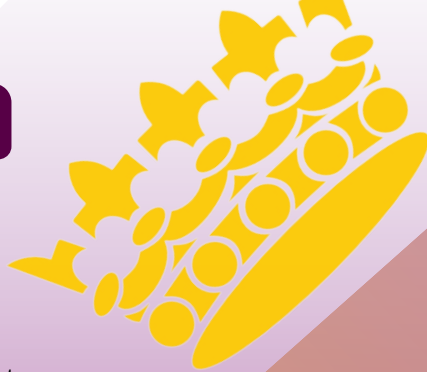


Photo Courtesy of Twitter

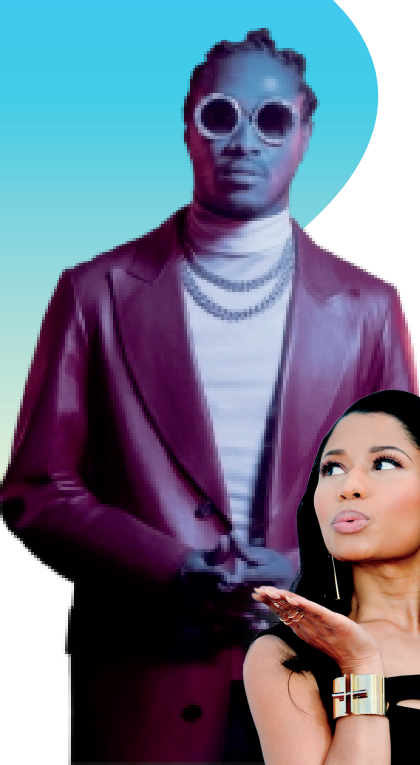
She knows how to entertain a crowd, throwing herself around the stage and walking out into the rows of fans. When Molly attended Gov Ball in 2021, she was first exposed to the album and energy of King Princess. After encouraging Meghan to listen to her music, her 2019 album *Cheap Queen* quickly shot to the top of our monthly recaps on Spotify. Because of our fondness for the album, hearing the old tracks evoked great excitement in row WW of the Orchestra.

A favorite for us both on *Cheap Queen* is "Hit the Back." In our opinion, her debut album outranks *Hold On Baby*, being home to many of her quintessential tracks. Her performance of "Hit the Back" in particular made us want to rage, but the seats and setup of Radio City made it hard to do that. The at-times awkward screaming and jumping sufficed; however, it's hard not to absorb her onstage energy and enthusiasm.

Towards the end of the show, she brought out special guest Julian Casablancas, the lead singer of The Strokes, to sing a cover of their "You Only Live Once." Neither of us are huge fans of The Strokes, but who doesn't love a guest surprise? Following the cover, she carried out the classic "leave-the-stage-and-make-us-beg-for-an-encore," reappearing in a new outfit: a tank top and pants with defined hips. She played three more songs from *Hold on Baby* to conclude the concert. Our walk back to Lincoln Center from Radio City to catch our Ram Van was filled with comparison of favorite songs and performances—and planning for our next concert. For now, though, we're looking forward to Radio City's next big feat: The Radio City Rockettes Christmas Spectacular!

King Princess has curated a brand of inclusivity in her work and social media presence, creating comfort for people of all identities throughout their journeys. The artist's publicity of her own perspectives on gender and sexuality gives people within the LGBTQ+ community visibility in the industry as well as an influential gay icon!!!

Rolling



Photos Courtesy of Twitter

MY ROLLING LOUD EXPERIENCE

By Maddie Bimonte

Marking my first festival, I can't express the joy I experienced when I received the email saying I was going to Rolling Loud. Especially for free. Tickets for the event are usually astronomical, and I would never think to go, even though the lineup this year was stacked. I honestly did not know what to expect and went in with an open mind. I have always heard rumors about what Rolling Loud is like or any music festival, so I was prepared to handle crowds, pushing, and the potential shove to the ground.

Arriving on the first day, I was immediately met with overpriced merchandise, food, drinks, and some great performances. Lil Uzi Vert had to be one of the highlights of my weekend, solely for the energy he possessed on stage.

But one of my favorite artists was slated to perform that night, Nicki Minaj. A little-known fact about me, I'm a huge barb. Getting the opportunity to see Minaj for free was a dream come true. What I didn't know was how painful it would be standing in the cold for 45 minutes waiting for her to go on stage. This marked one of Rolling Loud's biggest flaws: timing. Almost every single artist was late to their call time on stage all weekend. I get it, we're all human, and we're all going to be late sometimes. However, when you're given an hour-long set and miss 45 minutes, I will be slightly upset by it.

Controversially, I chose to skip Saturday, mainly because I did not want to be freezing cold. While I enjoy A\$AP Rocky's music, it wasn't enough to persuade me. I planned to return to the festival on Sunday to see Future and 21 Savage. Excitement was high; however, the weather forecast looked bleak. I geared up in all my waterproof clothes to ignore the fact it would rain during the festival.

But boy, I was unprepared for the weather I was about to experience.

The start of the night was great, while 21 Savage canceled his set after I waited 15-20 minutes for him, I was already prepared to see Soulja Boy. Credit to Soulja Boy for being the only performer all weekend who was on time and ready to go at the listed set time.

Soulja Boy did all his hits and more and quickly became one of my favorite sets all weekend. "Rick and Morty" and "Kiss Me Through The Phone" had to be my favorites, and he combined all his greatest hits in a cohesive set.

When Future's set rolled around, I again waited 20-25 minutes for the set to start. So far, the rain had held off, leaving me nice and dry for the set. However, once the action started, rain immediately began pouring. Future's set was only made better by the rain, in my opinion; there is nothing like hearing "Jumpman," "Bad and Boujee," and "Stick Talk" in the pouring rain while jumping around.

The rain, however, progressed into an absolute downpour, forcing the concert to end early. Much to the dismay of concertgoers and Future, he kept pleading on stage for one more song. Alas, the rain was so bad that sirens sounded, and everyone was forced to evacuate.

Regardless of all the negatives that weekend, it was absolutely amazing I was able to attend the concert because of Fordham. While I may never do this again, it was certainly a memory I will never forget.

Loud

A\$AP ROCKY AT ROLLING LOUD

By Mari Apazidis

A\$AP Rocky headlined Rolling Loud New York 2022, and boy was it SOMETHING. My friends and I were posted by the railing adjacent to the long passageway that separated the two crowds. We were very far from the main stage, but if the artist went all the way down to the end of the stage that was enveloped between the crowd, we had a half-decent view. Little did we know that Rocky had little intention of using the stage at all.

While waiting for Rocky, a crew of people brought out this white platform on wheels that appeared hollow (we speculated that Rocky was possibly hiding in the platform and would appear from inside). There was also a ladder on the platform, and it was placed in that hollow opening that just so happened to be directly next to my friends and I. When Rocky finally arrived, we were all shocked to see that he was performing on the white moving platform for the majority of his set. The whole show was mayhem. There were dancers dressed in white and moshers from the crowd surrounding the platform throughout Rocky's set (it was a little bit unclear how the moshers got there, presumably they jumped the railing that separated the crowd from the long passageway where the platform was).

Rocky brought multiple people up onto the platform with him, notably A\$AP Ant who he performed "The God Hour" with. The platform moved up and down the passageway every so often which resulted in the dancers surrounding the platform to reconfigure. Throughout all of this, my friends and I were completely freaking out at the fact that THE A\$AP Rocky was right in front of us, so close we could almost touch him.

One of the coolest parts of the experience was Rocky's choice to perform the majority of his set in the middle of the crowd. I'm sure that the die hard fans that fought tooth and nail to get to the front were incredibly frustrated, and rightfully so, but it was a nice breath of fresh air to enjoy an awesome artist up close without being inside a violently unforgiving mosh pit. I'd like to think that Rocky deliberately wanted to extend his presence deeper into the crowd and connect more with everyone at the concert, which was a very nice sentiment.

However, Rocky showed up very late, resulting in an incredibly short set about thirty minutes long. He also didn't perform his more popular songs, opting for unreleased songs and a couple of classics such as "Lord Pretty Flacko", "Jordye 2", and "Telephone Calls".

The overall consensus was that Rocky's set was terrible because of its short length and set list, which was something I personally didn't consider since I was just so overjoyed to have lucked out being so close to him.

Christian DeJesus, the biggest A\$AP Rocky fan I've ever met, commented on Rocky's set. "Being that it was my first festival and second concert ever, it was incredible to see my favorite artist, you know, perform. For me, at least, it was pretty crazy to be the first group of people to hear new songs and snippets, especially in person rather than on Soundcloud." Personally, I thought it was awesome to see a popular artist go against the grain. As an artist, he made choices that were significant for his art by choosing to showcase his newer pieces rather than crowd pleasers. Overall, it was such an awesome set for me and the highlight of my Rolling Loud experience.

Photos Courtesy of Cole Paiva



MUSIC BUILDS BRIDGES

By Sophia Skelton

“Many cultures but one world.”

That’s the motto of the World Music Institute (WMI), a Brooklyn based non-profit organization founded in 1985 that brings music and dance from around the world to New York City residents. Gaby Sappington is the Executive Director of WMI and has experience in the promotion and marketing side of the music business and nonprofits.

Sappington is a well-rounded music lover who says that her favorite music genre is “good music.” She happened upon the music industry “by accident” when she worked as an executive assistant to the CEO of Ariola Records, a German record label, during her summer break while attending the University of Vienna in the early 1980s. Ariola Records was a record label under the larger Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG), now known as Sony Music Entertainment Inc. After staying in touch with the company, Sappington was offered the role of promotions manager at BMG, later becoming head of the promotions department, where she worked “with everyone from the Chieftains to Blondie,” as well as David Bowie and Prince.

Her role was to promote the artists, interact with journalists and the media and organize interviews and meet and greets. This role requires creativity, as well as the ability to put oneself in other people’s shoes and knowing how to discern the key elements of an artist that people should know about first and foremost.

Sappington moved on from the music industry to put her marketing and promotion skills to a different use as a certified professional coach, specializing in communications, and then working for the Make a Wish Foundation, or as she calls it, “the Mercedes Benz of nonprofits.” As she began missing the music industry, she decided to apply for the role of executive director at the World Music Institute.

Sappington explains that the goal of WMI “is to provide affordable access to the arts, and to build bridges between people and cultures... We want to raise awareness and appreciation for the rich diversity of cultures around the globe.” Music is a healing art form that has the power to bond listeners of all backgrounds and walks of life. This musical nonprofit, run by a small but powerful team of three full-time employees, is putting in the work to provide music lovers with top quality entertainment and a musical education. The WMI season runs from July 1 to June 30, presenting 30 to 35 shows, with most ticket prices ranging from \$20 to \$40. The performances are held across all of the boroughs and in venues of different sizes so that every New Yorker has the opportunity to experience the joys of global music. They present well established artists like Zakir Hussain, a well known tabla player (an Indian instrument of two small drums that are slightly different in shape and size), in venues like The Town Hall in Manhattan’s theater district and the Skirball Center in Greenwich Village.

WMI also presents lesser known bands like Kardemimmit, a four woman Finish band. They often use venues like Drom in the East Village, Flushing Town Hall in Queens, the Brooklyn Bowl in Williamsburg, and the Apollo Theater in Harlem, among others. In addition to the live musical performances, a WMI plus experience is offered once a month through Zoom where people can watch conversations with a musician or ethnomusicologist, someone who studies music and the impact it has on people and cultures, and attendees can ask questions. This began when musical venues were closed due to COVID-19, but has continued because of its popularity. WMI also created two podcasts for similar reasons, one presenting recordings of the WMI plus Zoom presentations, and the other presenting folk tales. Sappington explains that the “international folk tales are being narrated by one of our supporters who is also an award winning storyteller,...[and] we pair him up with an artist or a group that represents the culture of that particular folk tale and then they improvise along to the narration of the folk tale”.

An exciting offering that combines cultural music and a night of dancing at the club is the monthly “Let’s Dance Night.” A live performer from a specific culture and one or two DJs who specialize in that culture play for the night at clubs like Elsewhere in Brooklyn or Nublu in the East Village, a club that even has its own record label.

Music is a gift that everyone should be able to experience. It has the power to inspire emotions, healing, and bonding, and WMI plays a major role in this. To make these experiences more affordable, they offer student and senior discounts. More information about the organization, their current fall/winter season, and their upcoming spring season can be found in their newsletter and on their website at worldmusicinstitute.org.

CORTEX LIGHTS UP THE JAZZ SCENE

By Ruby Fishman



"On September 19th, NYC's own Music Hall of Williamsburg hosted French jazz-funk group Cortex. It was Cortex's first time performing in the United States, made all possible by Jazz is Dead, a label started by Hip Hop producer Adrian Young and a Tribe Called Quest DJ-producer Ali Shaheed Muhammad. While Jazz is Dead collaborates with great musicians and releases jazz-centric albums, the label dedicates their time to appreciate the impact and beauty of jazz. Their founder Young himself was DJing as an opener, and after playing some Nancy Sinatra and Graham Nash, he said to the audience, "Jazz is Dead is a love letter to all of these luminaries that we have forgotten... We are going to let them know how much we appreciate them."

Attentive and hanging on to every word, the crowd was eager to experience this once in a lifetime show. Young made sure that they had to "scream like some shit just happened, cry with me like I'm crying with them, because they didn't realize this shit would happen," and the audience did just that. Everyone from the mezzanine to the floor and all the way to the back of the sound board erupted into a synchronous cheer full of passionate whistles and screams. Appearing from stage left came 75-year-old "luminary" Alain Mion, the reigning member of Cortex, accompanied by a band composed of vocalist Maeve Borzakian, drummer Cedric Affre, bassist Mohamed Ouraz, and saxophonist Loic Soulat.

"At their height, Cortex consisted of Mion, Alain Gandolfi, and Jeff Huttner, who was later replaced by Jean Grevet. They released five albums between 1975 and 2017. Their debut album *Troupeau Bleu*, "one of the most sought after albums globally for record collectors," has been sampled at least 142 times to date. Its most significant track, "Huit Octobre 1971," named after Mion's wedding anniversary with his late wife, has been used in MF DOOM's "One Beer," Tyler, the Creator's "Odd Toddlers," and a dozen other hip hop songs.



Troupeau Bleu was performed in its entirety during the show, and when the crowd heard the infamous "Huit Octobre 1971," everyone enthusiastically sang its intro lyric, a scat line only including the sound "fa." Although the lyric almost sounds like gibberish, its optimistic vocals provide an exciting preface to some energetic instrumentals. During "L'enfant samba," the third track off *Troupeau Bleu*, Soulat teared up his saxophone with such

heat that after every time he did it on another track, the audience would go absolutely wild. At one point, Mion asked in his French accent, "Do you want to hear something else?" The crowd immediately responded with a strong "YES!" The musician replied, "We will try," before playing another one of *Troupeau Bleu's* infectious funky tracks. By the end of the night, Mion and his band left the stage, but the Music Hall of Williamsburg wanted more. The crowd chanted "Cortex, Cortex, Cortex..." until Mion reappeared, heading straight to the piano set in center stage. He played "Mary et Jeff," a song dedicated to his late wife, starting off slow and sentimental, appreciating the moment of remembrance until picking up the pace through Borzakian's captivating vocals.

The jazz legend said he had never felt so much love in a room before, and at that moment, Cortex's impact had finally been embodied in the United States. The ear-to-ear smiles on everyone's faces in the crowd while the band took their bows showed just how influential jazz can be. The diverse audience even included rapper and chef Action Bronson, who was bopping his head the entirety of the night, and reportedly Tyler the Creator. The hip hop community and jazz lovers of NYC had experienced, in real time, the love and passion that Cortex's music exudes. Thanks to Jazz is Dead, Cortex's spirit had taken over Brooklyn, leaving people of all age groups and demographics in awe and wanting for more.

THE BACKSEAT LOVERS

@ BROOKLYN STEEL

By Maggie Peknic

On October 28th, The Backseat Lovers released their long-awaited sophomore album, *Waiting to Spill*. The album took three years in the making, and its release was met with much support as various listening parties took place in record stores across the country. One such listening party took place at Brooklyn's Legacy Records. Two weeks later, The Backseat Lovers would be heard once again in Brooklyn. But it wouldn't be over the wavelengths. This time, it would be live. On November 7th, The Backseat Lovers performed *Waiting to Spill* in its entirety for the first time ever at the Brooklyn Steel.

The vast, dark setting of the Brooklyn Steel resembles an expansive dark room stuck in a time warp. Despite its spacious floor, the venue felt narrow and cramped. The Backseat Lovers sold out the first leg of their *Waiting to Spill* Tour, resulting in numerous audience members bumping into one another at the Brooklyn show. Audience members were filled with nervous excitement as they squeezed their way to find the perfect spot. Many were simply trying to find a spot that allowed them to view the stage over the huddled group of tall men standing in the center of the venue (this is when I wish I wore my platform Doc Martens). Amongst the shifting of the crowd was opening act Bendigo Fletcher, whose indie rock setlist matched the vibes of The Backseat Lovers. While half the audience paid attention, Fletcher's music mainly acted as a backdrop for latecomers, who were rushing to buy their merch and drinks before The Backseat Lovers took the stage.

And after an hour and a half, they did. Screams erupted as The Backseat Lovers - Joshua Harmon (lead singer & guitarist), Jonas Swanson (lead guitarist & vocalist), KJ Ward (bassist), and Juice Welch (drummer) - slowly

walked on stage and began to strum the opening notes to "Silhouette." The shifting and bumping of the audience subdued like a calm storm - and it stayed that way. Throughout the entirety of the band's performance of *Waiting to Spill*, the audience was mostly tranquil and mellow. Their stillness reflected the contemplative nature of the album, which encapsulates the notion of being lost in your 20s. The album further reflects this notion through its mellow sound. The band experimented with more folk and country sounds, which



is especially noticeable in "Snowbank Blues" - a song that Harmon wrote initially as a parody of a classic country tune. With an emphasis on folk and country sounds, the band's new album strays from their typical electronic guitar riff infused sound, which usually results in consistent headbanging from the crowd during performances. Instead, the audience swayed and sang along.

The stillness of the crowd may have also been a reflection of the band's nervousness. After all, this was The Backseat Lovers first time performing their brand new album in its entirety for a live audience. Harmon expressed the band's nervousness near the beginning of their set; however, after four or so songs, he told the audience he was stunned. His lyrics were echoed back to him; the audience was singing along to an album that was released not even two weeks ago. While the audience may have been still with their bodies, their voices were strong. Harmon and the band didn't predict this response to the album. Sure, maybe they expected to hear the audience sing-along to their singles "Close Your Eyes" and

"Growing / Dying," which were released prior to the album. But there were some serious hard-core fans present, singing along to nearly every track. As the audience continued to sing along, The Backseat Lovers grew out of their shells. Instead of simply singing in place, they began to waltz with their instruments as their partners across the stage. Slowly too, the audience began to join in on the waltz, swaying along to the music.

After The Backseat Lovers finished performing *Waiting to Spill*, the tempo changed, and the headbanging began. The Backseat Lovers performed their staple songs, starting off with "Pool House" followed by the viral TikTok song "Kilby Girl," which currently has almost 189 million streams on Spotify. Immediately upon the first notes of "Kilby Girl" being played, a sea of phones were taken out to record the now frat-party staple. The lyrics were not merely echoed back to the band but were screamed back at ear-piercing levels. One man who screamed at the start of the show, "My girlfriend loves you," now screamed again and said, "I'm in love with you too now!" The calm sea of people transformed into a wild ocean, and lead singer Harmon's hair was its biggest wave. Harmon's consistent headbanging - his staple move - caused his long hair to sweep across the stage. The Backseat Lovers concluded their set with three of their well-known songs: "Maple Syrup," "Still a Friend," and "Sinking Ship."

Upon finishing, the band members humbly bowed and scurried off-stage. A woman turned to me and said, "Aren't they just so happy and nice?" She was right. Not only is the band kind, but so was the audience. Filled with superfans and newcomers alike, the audience was one of the most wholesome crowds I've been in to date. Strangers discussed their favorite songs and the new album, relishing in the band's music. I can only hope that The Backseat Lovers make the trek from Utah to New York again in the near future.

BEABADOOBEE @ BROOKLYN STEEL

By Francesca Sinisi

Just when I thought I couldn't love Beabadoobee anymore than I already do, I saw her perform at Brooklyn Steel and she's everything I dreamt she'd be and more.

I would describe this as the perfect Friday night and an even more perfect kickoff to Halloweekend. I'd never been to Brooklyn Steel before and while it did look like a blackout version of my middle school gymnasium, I liked the size and how easy it was to get there. It was the perfect sized crowd for the venue as well, definitely a little smushed but I wasn't being pushed around so I was a happy camper. The crowd was also friendly and dressed festively in adorable costumes, so no complaints here. She started with "10:36", which had the whole crowd jumping as one unit. This might be my favorite song off of Beabadoobee's latest album, *Beatopia*, so this was amazing to see live! This song was performed with very high energy. It was a great way to begin the show. She kept it high energy with "Talk", and "Tinkerbell is Overrated". In person, she sounds even better than the recording and had a lot of fun playing around on stage.



Photo Courtesy of
Francesca Sinisi

The vibe changed when Beabadoobee left the stage for ten minutes and came back with two violins and a cello. She talked about how much she loves the strings and how essential they are to the listening experience of *Beatopia*. She then played some of her slow songs like "Lovesong", "Ripples" (I cried, she cried, everyone was in tears), and an unreleased song called "Blue Song", which she said she wrote because she's "just so in love." Are you kidding me? She's also pretty when she cries, but you could already guess that much.

Beabadoobee finished the show off with some more upbeat tunes before calling it a night. Her guitarist, Jacob Bugden, who helped her write *Beatopia*, was another notable part of the show and had such a great presence on stage with an amazing voice as well. Watching Bea have fun with her songs, dance around on stage, and create such an intimate and vulnerable setting has made me appreciate and dig her music even more. If you're not listening to Beabadoobee you're doing something wrong!

Photo Courtesy of Rolling Stone

An Audience Observation: Tank and the Bangas

By Carlie &
Kate Caperan

This is a compilation of observations Carlie recorded at a Tank and the Bangas show at Blue Note Jazz Club in Greenwich Village (11/11). Below they are written by the both of us in a descriptive and present narrative.

My sister Kate and I walk into Blue Note, and we are immediately met by a bar with blue vibrant LED lights, dark walls and carpet, and dim lighting. We're stunned to see how packed the venue is— it's a sold out Friday night show. Blue Note has cabaret seating, meaning all patrons sit shoulder to shoulder. We came as a duo, so we are snuggled up against four strangers. And man are we SNUG. There's a rather stylish man sitting diagonally to the left of us wearing rounded fake glasses and a large hat. I have to compliment his fit, of course.

This stylish man ends up being a cinematographer for Tank and the Bangas, who awkwardly stands during the entire show as his tripod nestles into Kate's back. Did I mention before we are snug?

There are all sorts of people around, young and old from every ethnicity and race. The room is filled with all sorts of sound: laughter, instruments warming up during soundcheck, and even passive aggressive comments from the acting manager.

The stage is set above the audience, and blue lighting shines upon the stage in a single spotlight; it's the brightest light in the whole room. A microphone stands at the front of the stage. A single chair, a bass, and a guitar with an amp stand are behind it as well. A keyboard and piano are off to the left side of the stage.



Photo Courtesy of Carlie & Kate Caperan



The time has come for the show. Tank and the Bangas make a grand entrance into the dining and performance space. Tank, the lead singer, hasn't arrived yet. The woman next to us mentions that Tank will make her "big entrance." Tank for sure does, strutting down the stairs and through the sea of audience members. The staff asks for no flash; however the woman next to us, clearly a superfan, is cheering for Tank as her phone flash shines bright. We think she was making sure she would capture the best image and all of the best angles. We had a laugh about this with her afterwards.

Tank and the Bangas start their performance, beginning each song with a story or long inspiring introduction, often getting "mmhm's" and "that's right" responses from the crowd. These reactions are towards not only Tanks words but also towards her incredibly ranged singing voice.

Then, a surprise guest is announced. The crowd hushes. Tank introduces Norah Jones onto the stage, and the audience erupts into cheers as Jones appears. Jones and Tank greet each other with a warm hug and then perform "Don't Know Why," Jones's biggest hit, together. I watched my sister and other audience members stare and even shed a tear throughout this wonderful performance.

The audience listens quietly, awestricken until the piece ends, and the silence is broken with roaring applause. Tank and the Bangas continue their show. The entire set has an almost spiritual-like quality, where everyone in the space shares a grounded energy. Tank has everyone's full attention.

At the end of the show, Tank and the Bangas are met with booming applause. As they walk back through the crowd, audience members, now superfans, meet the musicians with wonderstruck greetings, gushing over the outstanding performance.

People immediately get up to leave to beat the crowd traffic. A line for the next performance of Tank and the Bangas is already forming outside of Blue Note. A man asked me how the show was while I walked by. Beaming, I say, "Amazing."

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October Playlist



November Playlist



December Playlist

Join RELISH Radio!
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Wednesdays from 1-4pm
to create podcast style pieces,
conduct interviews, and
highlight student artists!



Bruno Pruhs captures
Maya Lucia and her band
performing at Rodrigue's
Coffee House
(October 22, 2022)

GALLERY



Claire Reynolds
photographs
Jaguar Sun's
performance at
The Mercury Lounge
(September 2022)



BEYOND

Going Beyond Just an Album: Donald Glover's *Because the Internet* By Mari Apazidis

There are no instructions for using the Internet. For better or worse, it's free reign. Our generation was raised by this technological chaos—some of us have had the same Instagram account since fifth grade. With unlimited internet access, there comes both an all-encompassing power and an enormous responsibility. But how were we supposed to know that as eleven-year-olds.

Donald Glover, also known as Childish Gambino, created an album/screenplay entitled *Because the Internet*. In both the album and screenplay, he explores how the internet influences its users, shapes our behaviors, and how it can make us hyper-aware of everyone's thoughts about us. In an interview at Studio Q with Jian, Glover paints a hypothetical picture where you call someone a bad name in elementary school, and then you notice that your action caused everyone else in class to also fully believe what you said: "You don't have to deal with that online," says Glover, "You can say the worst thing to someone

[without feeling the consequences]... that's what trolling is."

At first, Glover's criticism of the Internet may lead us to believe that he hates the internet but that isn't true either. He expressed in the interview that he owes everything he has to Twitter and his online presence, and that the Internet can be a good thing, too. What makes this project so unique is that it goes beyond just music—it is philosophically profound. It even has a complementary short film and screenplay. Glover made more than music—he told a story.

The Boy (arguably based on Glover himself) is the main character of the *Because the Internet* screenplay. He has more money than he realizes what to do with and loves to troll people online. The fact that this entire story revolves around an Internet troll makes me think that Glover wants his audience to identify with The Boy to some extent. If we participate in the Internet in some

way, perhaps there are times when we can implicitly troll other people.

Glover's second track in *Because the Internet*, "I. Crawl," talks about how we are crawling all alone in this technological world. The chorus going into the verse goes as follows:

**"Where we were, kinda thing.
Betcha crawl, all alone.**

(Who am I?)"

Just like that, the album is already transformed into an existential dialogue. Alessia De Gasperis, formerly known as Kai, sings this preliminary chorus, and when Glover asks "Who am I?" in a disengaged way, his words are lost in the ambience of the music. Arguably, the "crawl" references how we are all new to the Internet, and in essence are crawling our way through like babies.

Moreover, having a presence on the Internet demands us all to look inward and ourselves, who

are we? What image are we presenting? Do we like the person that we present ourselves to be more than our actual selves? Do we even recognize ourselves?

“III. Telegraph Ave. (“Oakland” by Lloyd)” is played at a part in the screenplay where the main character, The Boy, meets a romantic interest, Nyala. First of all, “Telegraph Ave.” is an absolutely incredible piece. Glover created the song, “Oakland” by Lloyd, that exists within “Telegraph Ave.” In the song, Glover is singing along to “Oakland” in the car, and it starts with an underwater audio quality and blossoms into Glover’s beautiful verses. In the screenplay at this time, Nyala is talking to The Boy, who just drove to Oakland to see her. Wanting to end their romance, Nyala says:

“There’s a point you reach when you’re no longer able to feel like you did. Not about a person, not with a certain place, you just can’t feel like you did because that muscle or whatever is just dead... Or gone.”

The way I understood this part is that the Internet tends to numb us. We’re just going through the motions and reaching that point where we don’t feel normal. Time doesn’t feel real— even the Instagram algorithm simultaneously shows us pictures that were posted two minutes ago and two weeks ago. The muscle that we use to feel things fully is expended on instant gratification, and now we can only stomach a few seconds of content at a time until we’re bored. Despite the darkness of this part, “Telegraph Ave.” is simultaneously a light and beautiful love song:

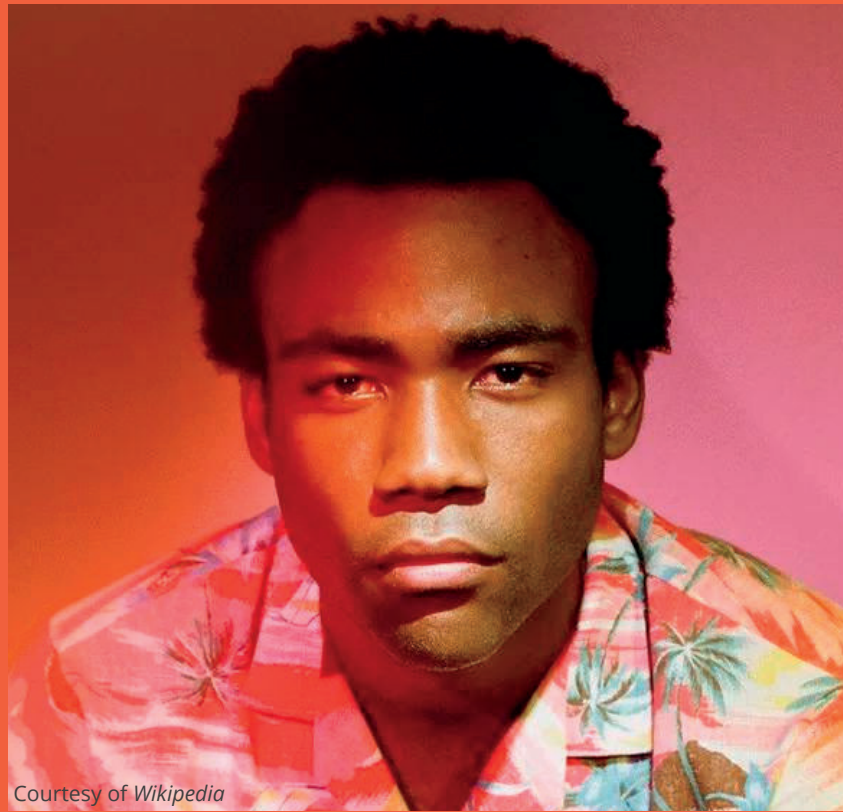
***“Fourth of July, house in Kauai,
yeah, we can try
So let’s try”***

Here, Glover imagines a future with this girl, picturing the holidays and the vacation homes, saying that “we can try.” Glover yearns for stability in love, but the screenplay suggests that their romance is over. So, Glover leaves it up to his audience. Which is it, does Glover get his “house in Kauai” or is there this overwhelming numbness surrounding his life?

In my opinion, it’s a mix of both. “Telegraph Ave.” is fleetingly beautiful, and placed at a time in the album where there is no hope.

Isn’t that how life is right now? Everything seems so hopeless, and yet don’t we find ourselves sometimes imagining a harmonious, peaceful future? The only way to get through is to dream sometimes, even if it’s just for a moment.

That’s how life is, and it’s *Because the Internet*.



Courtesy of Wikipedia

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                THE BOY
            We're going.

The Boy leaves. Fam opens his eyes.

                                CUT TO:

*****[PLAY SONG "TELEGRAPH AVE. " AT THIS POINT]*****

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Swank, Steve, and Fam are asleep in the car. The Boy sits
down in the drivers seat. He pulls out his phone and text
someone named NYALA:

im driving up now

...(that moment you know exactly what they're typing and how
they look doing it)
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Courtesy of Rockhaq

Direct screenshot of *Because the Internet* screenplay.
Available for free consumption on Reddit

COIN in Connecticut

By Erin Feist

Nashville-based indie-pop band COIN made a pitstop in Connecticut on September 24th as part of their *Uncanny Valley* tour. The tour, namesake of their fifth album released in March, has been their biggest yet. In fact, their show just the night before at MGM Music Hall in Boston was their largest to date, with a venue capacity just over five thousand. The Dome at Toyota Oakdale Theatre in Wallingford, Connecticut, was their only stop of the tour in the tri-state area. It was a bit of a trek from the Bronx, so my friends and I had to rent a car to get all the way there. Nonetheless, the journey was so worth it for such an electric and unforgettable concert.

The band's crowd connection was phenomenal. Their nonstop dancing and playfulness with both the crowd and each other set an energetically fun mood for the whole show. The size of the venue only contributed to the intimate feel of the show's atmosphere. The passion they performed with throughout their 80 minutes on stage—from upbeat hits like "Talk Too Much" and "Crash My Car" to slower ballads like "Let It All Out" and "Malibu 1992"—never left room for a dull moment among the audience. Screaming along to "Cutie," one of my personal favorites off *Uncanny Valley*, was most definitely the reason for my sore throat the next morning.

Honorable mentions go to "I Want It All," "Valentine," and "Youuu" from their 2020 record *Dreamland*. Other favorites that didn't make it on the night's setlist, like "Boyfriend," "Run," and "It Works," were made sure to be shouted with windows down on the car ride back.

The Dome, unheard of to me before this, proved to have some sentimental value to COIN. In a break between songs, lead singer Chase Lawrence described it as the first venue the band ever played outside of Nashville back in 2014, drawing loud cheers of support from me personally as a Tennessee native. After having been a fan back home for years, it felt really special finally seeing them live for the first time, and any expectations were far surpassed.

There was even a fan-organized project to hold up heart-shaped paper cutouts during their second to last song, "Loving." Afterwards, the little white hearts littering the floor were taken home by many as a souvenir from the show, myself included.



Courtesy of Erin Feist

Post Malone Rebranded: The Bubbly Persona Behind a Heavy New Project

By Maribelle Gordon

A married couple next to me at Post Malone's recent Madison Square Garden performance stood hopefully at the barricade of the stage with a sign that read "Let me play Stay?" The husband Ben had recently perfected the pop ballad from the singer's sophomore album *Beerbongs & Bentleys* on the guitar and was hoping to join him onstage during his acoustic set.

This request wasn't just one superfan's pipe dream though. At a music festival this past July in Stockholm, Sweden, hip-hop and pop megastar Post Malone brought a fan onstage for a spontaneous collaboration after spotting a sign in the crowd that read "Can I play STAY for you?" Since then, the performer has brought fans onstage at several shows and entrusted them with playing this track on his own guitar.

In addition to bringing fans onstage during shows on a whim, Post has also developed a tradition at his concerts to stick around unprompted for up to half an hour to talk to fans and give out autographs. Having such a gracious attitude and unique bond with his fans is just one element of Post Malone's recent image that has cast him as one of pop culture's most likable figures. His humorous, bubbly, and down-to-earth presence on social media and in the press has made it next to impossible for the public to have anything negative to say about him, even people who don't like his music.

Ironically, this sunny persona had its biggest emergence after the summer release of his fourth studio album "Twelve Carat Toothache" which tackles some very serious topics that the singer has only vaguely danced around in his previous work.

In Post Malone's first few projects, his most prevalent themes focused on newfound stardom and glorified the unruly behavior that often comes with it. Most of the lyrics in these projects pertain to copious amounts of sex, drugs and alcohol, as well as reckless money spending, which are common topics in hip-hop music of the 2010s. While his first and second studio albums did some vague exploration of heavy topics like heartbreak and anxiety, these were definitely not the biggest contributing themes for these albums.

His third album, *Hollywood's Bleeding*, took a deeper dive into some of the more depressing parts of fame and revolved around the pitfalls of a Hollywood lifestyle. The music itself was definitely commercialized, and to some critics, a little watered-down compared to his previous work that gave him such a unique and recognizable sound. The lyrics of "Hollywood's Bleeding" tell the story of an artist who is trying to break free from mainstream culture and the false glamour of it all. The production, however,



Courtesy of Twitter

"Anyone that appreciates music can recognize what a blessing it is that a singer as unique as Post Malone found sanctuary in being open and raw in his music before succumbing to Hollywood inauthenticity."

ultimately gave the album a mainstream and somewhat indistinct sound.

Along with losing some of his unique sound during the *Hollywood's Bleeding* era, it seemed like the artist was also losing some of the personality that had started to define him during his *Beerbongs* era. During the Runaway tour in 2019 and 2020, fans began expressing deep concern over Post Malone's behavior and demeanor onstage, many suspecting heavier drug use.

The worldwide quarantine came at the perfect time for the artist, giving him the opportunity to take a break from the lifestyle that seemed to be taking a toll on his physical and mental health. He took a hiatus from putting out music and for the most part, stayed out of the public's eye.

(con't on next page...)

He released a single in 2021 that raked in hundreds of millions of streams, but because it seemed to pander to an overdone style of hip-hop, it didn't receive the same critical acclaim or praise from fans that he received on earlier work.

This past June, Post Malone released his fourth studio album which was a huge step in a new direction for the artist, both sonically and thematically. While his third album revealed some of the crushing flaws of Hollywood, *Twelve Carat Toothache* showed the world many of the artist's own personal demons that he's been fighting in his few years of fame. He broadcasts his struggles with alcohol abuse, depression, low self-esteem, and self-destructive habits.

There were definitely a few songs with a mainstream pop feel, like his collaboration with Doja Cat, but even these songs explored themes of love and connection that have not had a place in his work before.

Being able to explore more personal topics, both positive and negative, and showing more of his emotions in his music seems to have been extremely beneficial to Post Malone's mental health and love for his career. Although many of the songs on *Twelve Carat Toothache* revolve around some of his recent and ongoing painful experiences, his energy in public appearances has completely shifted from the behavior that caused so many fans to be concerned for his health.

In most of his time as a public figure, Post Malone has stressed the importance of being true to oneself and doing what makes you happiest. Although it seemed like he started to lose touch with this personal mantra, it is evident that he has recently been able to practice what he preaches to his fans. His confidence in the art he creates and his exploration of personal identity through fashion and his appearance show a newfound appreciation for the crazy life he has taken on. Anyone that appreciates music can recognize what a blessing it is that a singer as unique as Post Malone found sanctuary in being open and raw in his music before succumbing to Hollywood inauthenticity.

Sammy Rae & The Friends

By Sarah Tobias

Sammy Rae & The Friends are influenced by a myriad of artists and genres of the past because they simultaneously step into a blend of music and a new place in musical history with their innovation and experimentation. When searching the band's genre on Google, the most common answer is: "alternative/indie jazz/rock." By this definition, one can already note the band's expansive musical tendencies.



However, as said on their website, their musical aims and how they want their work to be received are even more complex. "From world to jazz to funk, folk and rock, we've got all the bases covered," their website reads. The band is widely known for their creation of accepting and category-defying environments, with recurrent phrases such as "We don't have fans, we have Friends," "hangs" instead of gigs, and "no genres, only friendship" (Sammy Rae). The band's mantra only further pushes the cultural idea of acceptance, as it states, "Go put a smile on somebody's face, go tell somebody they've got a place in this world, go tell somebody you wanna be friends with them." Sammy Rae & The Friends certainly succeed in conveying these values through their music and to their audiences during performances.

(cont'd next page)

Sammy Rae & The Friends use elements of jazz, rock, and more in their music, and these genres greatly contribute to their sound as a whole. These genres' relationships with audiences throughout history have certainly changed, but their purposes carry some inherent implications. The band's jazz elements are most reminiscent of swinging big band jazz, which dominated the early 1940s. During World War II, big band jazz was in part created as a musical outlet to which individuals could dance and forget the troubles of the world—a goal shared by The Friends. At its core, big band jazz is made to be dance music, and Sammy Rae & The Friends certainly did not lose this element of jazz history in their music.



At the concert, nearly everyone was dancing as they pleased, as the rhythm moved you to do so. Additionally, the use of syncopation and reeds, which is imminent in swing, is used in most songs by The Friends. During the concert, saxophonist Kellon Anderson had many powerful solos (as Duke Ellington included in many of his own swing pieces). In the 1950s when rock began to emerge and rapidly develop, overshadowing jazz, an emphasis on rebellion and rhythm took charge in this quickly-spreading genre. The Friends' drummer C-Bass certainly took charge of the rhythm and strong meter with some march-like solos, which caught listeners in many songs and pulled you forward with the energy of the band.

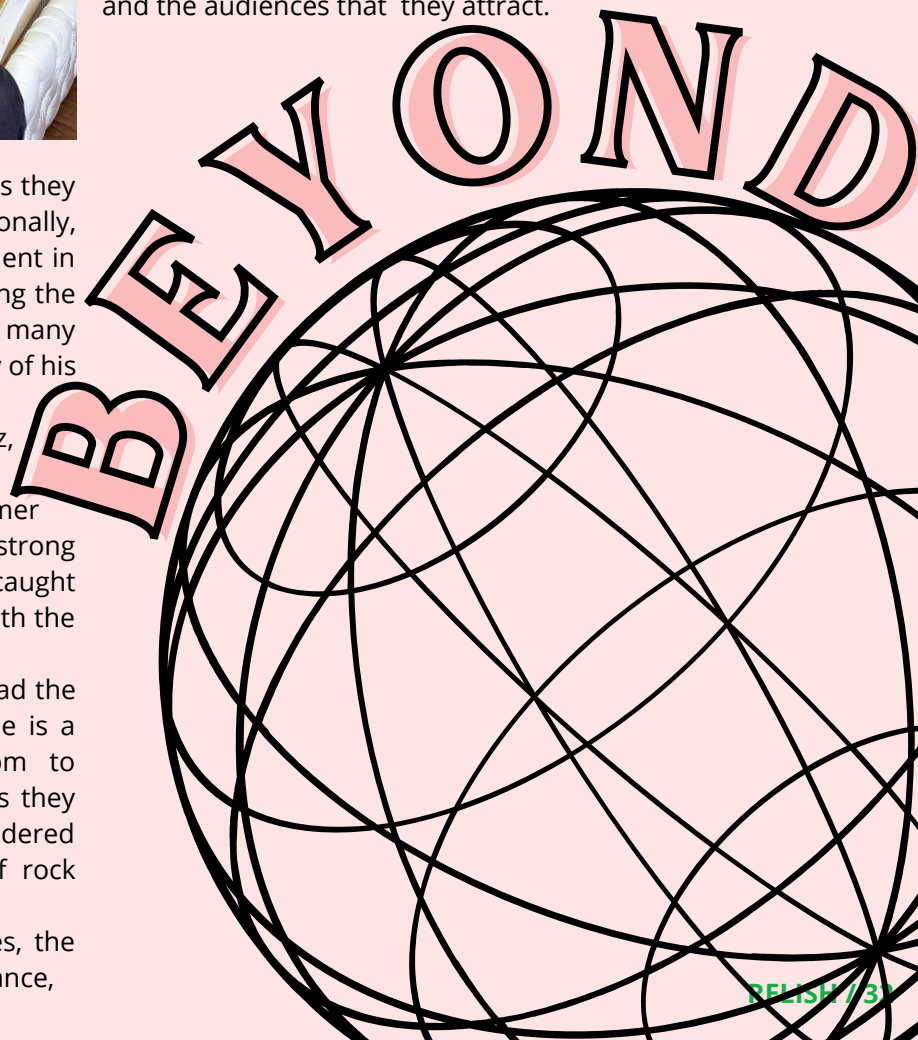
Beyond being a spectacular performer, I've had the pleasure of meeting C-Bass several times, and he is a pure delight. Furthermore, the band's freedom to embrace all, and more importantly themselves as they are, is still certainly (and unfortunately) considered rebellious in our society—a prominent aspect of rock music.

By using these techniques from past genres, the band transmits cultural values of rebellion, acceptance,

and freedom from the world's troubles through their music.

Audience members of Sammy Rae & The Friends are encouraged to "Raise your voice, wear your funky clothes, and dance how you like," a recommendation that would be mirrored mainly in different genres of jazz and types of rock. It is this mutual relationship that they create between themselves and their fans (friends) that characterize their performances. In contrast to our knowledge of 19th-century concert halls and opera houses where audiences would enter concerts with distrust and hostility while the composer resented their dependence on the audience, Sammy Rae & The Friends encourage the audience to see themselves as friends to the band, rather than fans or those who are "less-than." Their music is also in opposition to Berg's ideals in the early 1900s, wherein he believed that performances should not be directed toward audience approval.

The aim to create a mutual relationship with the audience was evident in Sammy's speaking to us with gratitude throughout the set, demonstrating their goal for band-audience dynamics even further when the whole band moved to the center of Terminal 5 surrounded by the audience. To bring the audience even closer into their artistry, they requested that we sing and repeat a phrase over the instrumentation while Sammy sang the melody to the song. This band's creative, inclusive, and experimental endeavors certainly characterize their concert experiences and the audiences that they attract.



RE - VIEWS



Being Funny in a Foreign Language

By Georgie Fleming



A poppy, electronic melange of their past four albums, The 1975's fifth album, *Being Funny in a Foreign Language*, is chock full of 2016 nostalgia. Releasing four singles—"Part of the Band," "Happiness," "I'm in Love with You," and "All I Need to Hear"—the band's newest work reflects an evolution of style but also leans more towards the arrangements of energetic *I Like It When You Sleep, for You Are So Beautiful yet So Unaware of It* (2016) than the ironic *Notes on a Conditional Form* (2020).

Saxophone, synth, and vibrant guitar combine on "Happiness" and "Oh Caroline," evocative of 80s-esque favorites like "The Sound" and "She's American." The album's 43-minute run diverts from their previous works—its brisk energy, however, does not take away from lead vocalist Matt Healy's satirical cultural commentary. Bringing in Jack Antonoff on production, vocals, and arrangements, the radio-ready quality of the album diverges from the rawness of *Notes on a Conditional Form* and *A Brief Inquiry into Online Relationships* (2018). Considering Antonoff's status in the pop hit-making business collaborating with Taylor Swift and Olivia Rodrigo, I was not surprised by his uncomplicated, catchy instrumentation and production.

Other standouts were "Wintering" and "About You," reminiscent of the melancholic doting track "Paris" (2016). The perspective of this work is intrinsically romantic, in all of its cliché glory. On "About You" Healy sings, "We get married in our head," conjuring the hopelessly romantic remembrance of past and lost love. Its colorful, energetic bridges and catchy repetitions have a commercial quality, yet it does not altogether discredit the band's use of abstract lyricism. *Being Funny in a Foreign Language* is certainly one of their most light-hearted works to date; nonetheless, The 1975 salvages their integrity by relishing the corny and prioritizing feel-good sounds.



Four Songs Blood Orange

**By Francesca
Sinisi**



Before listening to their latest project, I was already a big fan of Blood Orange and really got into them towards the end of last semester and this summer. Some of my personal favorites are "Forget It," off of their *Coastal Grooves* album, as well as the more well-known "Charcoal Baby," off of *Negro Swan*. They've been making noise in indie and R&B music for quite some time, so if you're at all familiar with these genres, you most likely know about them. Along with additional echoing and distortions, *Four Songs* has the same general tones that one would expect.

I think the release of this EP in the fall was perfect timing considering how the songs give you that sad and angsty fall vibe you are desperately searching for without giving you early onset seasonal depression—which, if you're anything like me, is a fine line that need not be crossed until December and the finals era. The instrumentals and lyrics aren't sad more than they are melancholic to keep you in your daydream, while the electronic beats keep a pep in your step as you listen on your way to class. And the fact that it's so short just leaves you wanting more!

To quickly recap each song: "Jesus Freak Lighter" is doing mindless homework at a fast pace, feeling like I'm solving the problems of my life while doing a simple Spanish MyLab task. "Something You Know" is sitting in the library on a rainy day with a cup of lemon tea. "Wish" is walking at top speed to the Ram Van, because you're late, but you're not being dramatic about it—you're still hot and mysterious. "Relax and Run" is thinking about your past Halloween crushes, because you're still not over it and can't drink chai without thinking about them.

Not sure if *Four Songs* is my favorite thing that Blood Orange has put out, but hey—I'm still listening and not complaining. Give it a listen between classes, or in any of the previously provided scenarios.

Midnights



Lavender Haze
Maroon
Anti-Hero
Snow On The Beach
You're On Your Own, Kid
Midnight Rain
Question...?
Vigilante Shit
Bejeweled
Labyrinth
Karma
Sweet Nothing
Mastermind

Midnights Taylor Swift

By Maddie Bimonte 🥕🥕🥕🥕🥕

Midnights marks Taylor Swift's 10th studio album as she revisits her pop roots and weaves together inspiration from past albums. Upon first listen, it truly wasn't in my top favorite albums by Swift, and I struggled to enjoy certain songs on the album. Yet, upon multiple re-listens, I can say this album might be one of her most clever projects to date.

After the transition to folk music on the albums *Folklore* and *Evermore*, Swift grew her ever massive fan base even further, and it seemed tremendously difficult for her to gravitate back into the pop world. However, Swift did what she does best, using a collage of her most recent albums to create this new sound. Hints of *Lover* are evident in the album opener "Lavender Haze," while spots of the Grammy-winning album *1989* shine through on "Question...?". The album is written as an homage to old Swift fans, and many can appreciate the parallels drawn.

Some of the highlights of the album have to be "Anti-Hero," the bouncy and strut-able chorus of "Karma," the tension building on the bridge of "Mastermind," and the storytelling and drums on "The Great War." Even further, the 3am extension of the tracklist features seven more songs, even bringing up topics like the dysfunctional relationship between Swift and John Mayer on "Would've Could've Should've."

All in all, the album has a very nostalgic feel, and—while the lyrics may not have the same depth as prevalent on her previous folk albums—it retains that pop feel we're so used to with Swift. Pop at its core is supposed to be digestible, fun, and relaxing, something Swift knows "all too well."

For Swift fans, it's hard to dislike an album made by the pop icon. Now, we just wait for the next inevitable re-release to enjoy Swift once again.



Come Home The Kids Miss You Jack Harlow

By Mari Apazidis 🥊🥊🥊🥊🥊

Think about a good album, one you love a lot. Most likely, it has a distinct sound and story, or is inspired by something profound in the artist's life, or is catchy at least. Jack Harlow's 2022 album release, *Come Home The Kids Miss You* is directionless, dull, and maybe TWO songs are objectively catchy (but that still doesn't make them good).

Granted, the "catchiness" of an album is subjective, but it doesn't matter how catchy an album is if its songs rip off another artist. For instance, "Poison (feat. Lil Wayne)" sounds like a discounted Drake song. There are mismatched vocals over a high-pitched closed hi hat beat, there's no steady pulse and it is super awkward. It is completely disengaging, and the message is boring. Oh, we get it Jack Harlow; you like this lady so much that she's poisoning your mind. No one's ever thought of that before! Super original!

Now what about the songs that really took off, like "Nail Tech" and "First Class"? I will concede that they are catchy songs, but they suck in every other way. "First Class" is a testament to how lazy Harlow has become with his music. He doesn't even spell out all of "glamorous," tacking on the o-r-o-u-s at the end of the verse as if it wasn't a cop out.

And finally, let's talk about "Dua Lipa." What a weird, creepy song. Harlow blatantly objectifies Dua Lipa, saying that he wants "to do more with her than do a feature." Harlow said that he got her consent (technically), but it is public knowledge that Lipa had an uncomfortable response to the song. It's one of those things where Harlow definitely should have picked up on Dua Lipa's hints if he had a brain cell or two.

Overall, it's a 0/5 for me. I regret listening to it at all!



The Car Arctic Monkeys By Georgie Fleming



Arctic Monkeys' alluringly experimental new album, *The Car*, leans into all the heart-wrenching absurdism of their previous work. Similar sonically to the elegant orchestration and avant-garde instrumentation of their album *Tranquility Base Hotel & Casino* (2018), this new album seems like a culmination of everything that the Arctic Monkeys sound has been working up to thus far.

Opening with the jazz-and-funk-influenced "There'd Better Be A Mirrorball", plunges the album into an exploration of fame, disillusionment, and inescapable remnants of past love. The transitions throughout the album are subtle, creating lulls that allow for the progression of the slow-moving yet encapsulating arrangements.

In "Jet Skis on the Moat," the synthy track mystifies abstract concepts using the same fantastical world-building seen in *Tranquility Base*. This track stands out as one of my favorites, conjuring the flavor of groups like The Smiths and The Velvet Underground.

Leading into "Body Paint," the track's sound transports back to the AM era—drawing parallels through a balance between glam-rock guitar and lethargic vocals as in "Number 1 Party Anthem" (2013). In its most literal track, Turner describes someone "so predictable" that he knows "just what [they're] thinking," adding ironic commentary on his abstraction of love and relationships on the rest of the album.

While *The Car's* sound is a far-cry from the headbanging *Favorite Worst Nightmare* (2007) or *Whatever People Say I Am* (2006), its lyrics feel close to the band's roots with a visible maturation of style. It reflects Alex Turner's sense of paranoia and anxiety towards the band's growing fame since being thrust into the spotlight following AM's 2013 release.

Another glamorous love song, "Hello You," hones in on *The Car's* nostalgia for a different era while opening a new, even more elusive chapter. *The Car's* unpredictable duration leans into its film soundtrack essence, ending its 40 minute run with the profound, "Perfect Sense." The Arctic Monkeys have struck with another enticingly obscure album.



DS4EVER GUNNA

By Alan Ventura

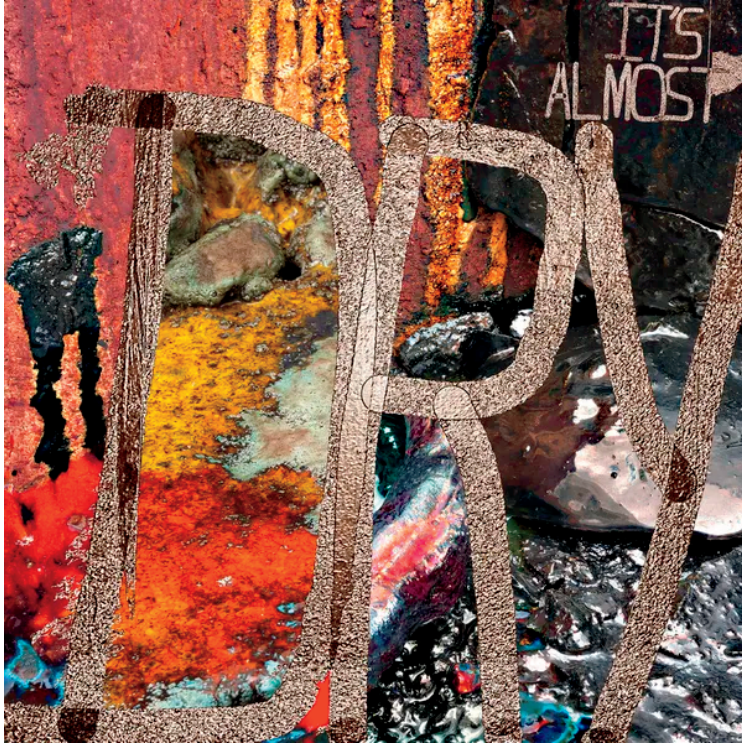


It is often said in the professional sector that timing is everything, and for YSL Records affiliate Gunna, this could not ring more true. His third official solo album *DS4EVER* marks the fourth installment into the Drip Season canon, the first of which to not be advertised and distributed as a mere mixtape. Such a move symbolizes what I believe to be a major turning point in Gunna's status as a major player in contemporary hip-hop. The numbers for *DS4EVER* echo this sentiment, debuting at the number one spot on the Billboard charts the same week as the Weeknd's critically lauded *Dawn FM*. Gunna started out 2022 with a bang and was poised to go on a monumental run unforeseen since his influences—had he not been one of the many YSL personnel to be silenced by the RICO charges levied against them in late spring.

It seems as though the most up-to-date project in Gunna's discography for the foreseeable future will be *DS4EVER*, and I'm sure that for Gunna fans it'll serve that function well. As someone who has never been a Gunna fan, however, I can attest that this project certainly didn't make much of an effort to change my stance.

Granted, *DS4EVER* isn't without its brief moments of genuinity like the self-reflection of destructive habits offered on "livin wild" or the ponderance of the strength of relationships on the former portion of the double-track closer "so far ahead > empire." But when these moments are so few and far between in an neverending sea of nihilistic mutterances, the value of the project as a whole suffers. Even the quality of the LP to this extent varies, ranging from the inoffensive if not incoherent "private island" to the numb-inducing "thought i was playing" to the frankly annoying "flooded." Mix that with consistently blasé production and directionless guest appearances, and what results is a project that revels in its own lack of substance, justifying its fifty-five-minute runtime with track after track that offers the facade of focus while at the same time refusing to deviate from the one sound it employs that has proven to sell.

It seems like Gunna tried to do a lot with *DS4EVER*, but in the end, he ends up not doing much. I'm not one to diss the artistic value of music based solely on aesthetics, but it really is projects like this that give the pejorative "mumble rap" credence.



It's Almost Dry

Pusha T

By Alan Ventura



The only word I can think to describe the Best Rap Album nominees at the upcoming 2023 Grammys is disappointing. Nominations for the category over the last couple of years have taken critical reception into noticeably higher consideration than in ceremonies past, but with this newest lineup of commercial successes and critical pans, it just feels as though the Academy is reverting back to its old tendencies.

That said, one album that I was relieved to see get the nod was *It's Almost Dry*, the latest solo outing from coke rap extraordinaire Pusha T. The Virginia-based rapper has made quite the outstanding name for himself over the last twenty-five years or so, having done it all from putting his face on a certified classic LP in Clipse's *Hell Hath No Fury* to releasing inarguably one of the greatest diss tracks and counter-diss tracks of all time against Drake more than a decade later. To the hip-hop enthusiast, there is nothing left for Pusha T to prove; to Pusha T, however, there seems more to prove now with his current superstar status than ever before. Suffice to say, *It's Almost Dry* surpasses most expectations set for it—and not by reinvention either, but rather by reinforcement.

On "Dreamin Of The Past" featuring GOOD Music cohort Kanye West, King Push makes known where his ambitions lie on this project: "You hollerin', 'Top five,' I only see top me." Listening to Pusha T rap is like watching the star center of your favorite basketball team go for fifty in a game in the sense that you know exactly what his next move is going to be, yet the proficiency with which he does it never ceases to mesmerize you. The street talk has been turned up to eleven on this project, and Pusha T's rock-solid abilities as an emcee on top of his ear for Pharell-Kanye joint production sounding just grimy enough makes *It's Almost Dry* as much of a technical showcase as it is a sonic one. Brief moments of topical stagnation aside, it's an enthralling listen filled with standout moments from guests like wiseman Jay-Z and a Malice sounding in prime Clipse from among others. What's more, sitting only at just over a half-hour long, it knows not to overstay its welcome.

It's Almost Dry is definitely deserving of the Grammy nomination it received in more ways than one, and—win or lose—it does my heart good to see "cocaine's Dr. Seuss" finally receive the recognition accredited to him.



Chef:

Movie Sountrack

By Kate Caperan



If you have a healthy appetite and great music taste, the movie *Chef* (2014) is for you. Directed and starred in by Jon Favreau, *Chef* tells the story of an uninspired professional chef who embarks on a cross-country food truck journey to reconnect with his passions for food and family.

Chef's soundtrack consists of a mix of music genres. From latin boogaloo to reggae, R&B, Texas blues and no wave, this soundtrack seems to consist of as many different music genres as U.S. states Favreau's food truck travels to throughout the movie.

In *Chef*, every song is distinct and is expertly aligned to fit each scene. The combination of a heart-stringing plot, mouth watering food cinematography, and a diverse arrangement of songs come together perfectly to tell a wholesome story.

One of the greatest scenes that highlights *Chef's* soundtrack has to be the grilled cheese scene, where Favreau's character cooks his son possibly the greatest grilled cheese in existence. As the butter sizzles, you are immediately met with the soft, upbeat reggae love song "Lucky Man" by Courtney John. A love song may seem like an unlikely choice to encapsulate the relationship between a father, son, and a grilled cheese sandwich (the holy trinity?), but it fits this scene perfectly.

The time and care Favreau's character puts into the creation of this perfect cheesy sandwich reflects the love he has for his son and his craft. In *Chef*, Favreau's character isn't always able to outwardly express his love and gratitude for his son, but his cooking always does. As the creation of the ultimate grilled cheese is beautifully filmed (it truly is beautiful), you feel the love that goes into creating something as simple as a grilled cheese from a father to his son.

Now I don't want to spoil the whole movie, so I decided to stick to one scene, because in *Chef*, it's pretty hard to separate its soundtrack from the plot of the movie. I guess this is a good problem to have; the soundtrack sure did its job. You'll have to watch the rest of *Chef* (if you haven't already) to see, and hear, how the rest of the movie's soundtrack perfectly melts into the plot of one of my favorite movies.

