

STAR WARS

PUB QUIZ

SHADOWS BAR • MAY 4TH 7PM



FilmSoc



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Karaoke Killaz

You do it in the shower, while alone and sometimes in the company of friends. No, we're not talking about wanking...we mean singing!

The both of us love a good sing song sesh and will find any excuse to hold an editors meeting in a coin booth karaoke whenever possible. Pictured is actually us on a very casual Tuesday night, candidly serenading you the reader.

To us, coming into the month of May means getting out of the cold and getting inside a Karaoke booth. It means getting warm on booze and letting your stress out into a microphone. From wailing Blur to assigning each other parts in Toxic we know music can be healing, restorative and a great mood lifter.

May also marks the beginning of Aotearoa Music Month. These upcoming four weeks are expected to be full of live shows, album releases and exciting acts to fill your chilly Autumn nights.

Not sure who to listen to first? Well we present the lay of the land here in the long white cloud with our 'Live Laugh Love Live Music' spread. We'll introduce you to local acts and present the reality of being a musician in the country. What we found was that in actuality it's pretty shit out there. In need of support, our small music scene is begging for people like you to go get out there!

So our advice this month? Listen local and sing internationally!

If the small stage is more your thing then you're probably familiar with the humid, sticky arena of a Karaoke bar. Whether you think it's a great way to socialise or

avoid it like your overbearing aunty, there will come a time when the spotlight lands on you and a mic will be passed your way. Now the option is yours; freeze, faun or fucking body that shit.

Save yourself some embarrassment and take some tips from our many late, soju filled nights at Luxury Karaoke.

1. Karaoke Bars aren't the slay you think they are

Everyone's screaming into the mic, people are too drunk to stay on tune and you're sick of the constant carouseling of Mr Brightside, Sweet Home Alabama and/or Dancing Queen. The wait alone leaves enough time to talk yourself out of the song and that's never a good sign. The introvert in us just gives this a big no, so just go somewhere else we reckon.

2. Spend the extra coin on a private room or booth

Private rooms come with the luxury of more space, more time and no waiting for pitchy patrick to finish his poor rendition of Creep. (You can actually cut your mates off in a private room!) Pay by the hour and get a whole room for you and the bros to scream Party in the U.S.A together.

On a smaller scale, coin operated booths are great for impromptu scream sessions or intimate duets. If you're brave enough, it's a great first date location. You can tell a lot by someone's music taste. They're *really* into Mac DeMarco? It's not looking

good! Careful!

3. Come prepared

It's so awkward waiting in the dead air as your mate catastrophizes over a song choice. Keep the good vibes going and make sure to queue your songs with the help of a pre-made curated playlist. Bonus points if you know how to work the Karaoke remote without the assisted subtitles.

4. Read the goddamn room

Are you queuing Adele again babes? Is the night morphing into your break-up playlist?

Play songs that everyone can sing to and be sure to keep it above 90 bpm.

5. Tall poppy syndrome ain't a thing here

Now is your time to show off. We're not saying go sing over your friend during the duet but now is your chance to queue that solo. You've only sung it in the shower a million times. Go ahead and put that practice to good use! Your friends will appreciate the effort and might even foster some competition. Try not to take the scores too seriously though, we think they're rigged personally.

Happy singing songbirds!

Off bopping,

Mairātea & George

AT CONCERTS

All hail the taxi: quick fix or solution?



OLIVER COCKER

For a public transport organisation, Auckland Transport has a complicated relationship with private transportation methods. The spending of almost \$20,000 on taxis to Harry Styles' concert when the bus service was overloaded is no exception. In the past year, headlines have read "AT advises locals to drive to event," or "Ferries out of action: replaced by taxis," and even "Auckland Transport pays \$100K for cars between offices." Compounded by a letter from our mayor dearest asking AT to put private interests first, it is easy to see why they do this. But is it just bandages on a deeper wound?

Everyone in Auckland knows the story: the system is broken. It is expensive, overloaded, and unreliable.

Only about a third of buses in the area show up on time—but it's okay, if it arrives within a fifteen-minute window around the scheduled time, then AT considers it reliable.

The average speed of a public bus during peak times is about 24kmph, and the scheduling calculator is not well equipped to adjust to increased traffic volumes. That is not even accounting for access: urban bus routes are allowed to space their stops anywhere up to 3km apart, creating areas where car usage becomes a necessity for modern life. With railway

upgrades closing much of the network this year, trains are not much better.

The question becomes, if you know there is going to be a big event, and weeks in advance you announce that you will be unprepared,

is it right to drop a quick fix with taxi cabs? About 1000 people needed transportation to Mount Smart Stadium for Harry Styles. That is only 22 buses or just ten double-decker services.

A 2012 Transportation Group report found that buses cost just under \$30 an hour to operate. We can adjust, for the 28% inflation since then, to \$38.50. Putting all the maths together, my 22 regular buses would have to be ferrying people for a full 24 hours before the concert before they lost more money than the taxis. None of this is to mention the extra congestion caused by all those taxis on the road. My 22 buses would take up roughly the space of 66 cars instead of clogging the roads with hundreds.

But it is not that simple: there's a supply problem. There are only 1700 bus drivers in Auckland for a network designed for 2200 drivers. A recent pay rise to \$26.87 has been

unable to attract people to the highly stressful job, in which abuse has become increasingly common since the pandemic began. And thus, the Auckland Transport executives were given a choice: successfully draw more money out of a downsizing council, or cut down. Unsurprisingly, socialism lost, and the system is in cost-saving mode.

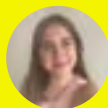
The problem is how we view Public Transport. Its impacts are remote to its activities. It seems only to get a person from here to there and get a small concession out of them when they hop off. But the truth is, of course, that what that person does moves the world. It brings money to businesses, students of all ages home, and the elderly to wherever they fancy for the day. There is no reason why each business, organisation, or parent should not provide extra funds to ensure that this can continue. Or perhaps, each concert organiser and goer, willing to pay hundreds of dollars for a ticket, could just pay a two-dollar bus ticket too.

The AT budget shortfall would be fixed with just \$25 from each person in Auckland. That's the cost of one 6km taxi each.

Instead of increasing a reliance on comparatively more expensive private vehicle fleets as the budget gaps become more pronounced, it appears that it is time to step up and take a deeper look into transport.

mama tf you mean
'tba' the festival is
this weekend...

Coachella 2023: just as much of a fuck-up as
your deadbeat ex



TALIA NICOL

If you follow the music or arts scene even loosely, by now you've probably seen all the major headlines from both Coachella weekends. Frank Ocean starts his Weekend One set 40 minutes late and it doesn't get live streamed. He hints at a new album during the set, then dips out of headlining at Weekend Two, citing a "fractured leg". Everyone's favourite crocodile and Camilla Cabello are all over each other like two horny high schoolers again. Bad Bunny apologises for verbally shitting all over Harry Styles.

In spite of (or perhaps because of) the relative lack of drama, Coachella this year was disappointing. Boring outfits, missed sets, spotty live streaming coverage, and

a nagging feeling that Coachella is no longer really about the music anymore.

Since the rise of TikTok over the pandemic, it's become another influencer olympic event. If you're an influencer, or at least consider yourself to be one, the chances are you're not going for the music. You're going to sit around in love-heart nipple stickers, maybe do a tab half covered in glitter and desert sand, and then pay \$15USD for an iced coffee. Then, you finally head over to your TikTok and post about what a great time you had, when in reality you paid a ludicrous amount of money to sit around frying in the sun, see an artist give half a set before dipping, and get a cool 100,000 likes on a video you made called "GRWM FOR DAY ONE OF COACHELLA!!!"

Evidence in favour of Coachella coming to its end?

Vanessa Hudgens didn't show up. The very same girlie that was on *that* infamous Instagram live in 2020 crying about how Coachella had been cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions, in spite of thousands of mass deaths across the USA. She's set the fashion standard for the festival for years, but she's done her dash. If Vanessa has gotta go her own way just like she did back in High School Musical 2, maybe the festival has, too.

Frank Ocean couldn't even be arsed to come back for Weekend Two, even though his headline event had been pending since pre-pandemic times in 2020. Sure, he cited that sprained leg,

but as a disabled person, I say: get that man a stool for the stage. He literally had one during Weekend One, and it's not like it's his style to run around the stage during his sets anyway. Organisers were left scrambling at the last minute to find a new headliner for Sunday 23 April (closing night), and announced on Twitter the day before Weekend Two kicked off that the ominous performer was "TBA". The title of this article comes from a top liked comment underneath the post. People aren't happy with the organisation, that much is clear. Perhaps Coachella is set to be the next victim of influencer cancel culture.

But, the point still seems to stand that influencers are paying exorbitant amounts of money for tickets before they even know who is performing. And if you're a B or A list influencer, realistically you're probably not even at the performances themselves: Revolve is treating you so well with their invite-only, exclusive free party that you're good just to have a few drinks there, kick back and take a ride on their bougie carousel.

On a side note, is anyone else seeing the glaring similarities between Coachella and a certain New Zealand educational institution? They get some attractive people to promote their mediocre efforts on TikTok and Instagram, but behind the glossy facade is just generally shitty administration and a cooked money making scheme.

Following Frank Ocean's dip, a headliner pulling out at the last minute is certainly nothing that the festival hasn't seen before. Last year, Kayne West also changed his mind right before the festival began (though as I'm sure goes without saying, given the circumstances, this was less of a shock). Swedish House Mafia and the Weeknd played a tag team set in his place.

Also, James Charles is a big guest name around Coachella. Not much more to say on this, really. If his bedazzled ass crack is something to watch out for at a music

festival, it's a pretty sad reflection of the state of the festival itself.

The fashion scene, which Coachella has been known for since it premiered in 1999, has also seemingly gone down the drain. Big names like Kendall Jenner rocked up in jeans, while Zoey Deutch wore a t-shirt and denim skirt that one fashion magazine likened to something they would've worn to their year 6 disco. It seems rich people are now opting to jump onboard the "stealth wealth" train for Coachella—in other words, continuing to wear sponsored outfits that cost tens of thousands of dollars, but said outfits look like what my mum was grabbing me from the Pumpkin Patch clearance sale in 2009.

On a final, and particularly brutal ending note,

**the festival itself
didn't even sell out.
People were literally
selling tickets on
Twitter and Tiktok
hours before the
second weekend
kicked off, begging
people to take them
off their hands
after Frank Ocean
cancelled.**

While Twitter doom-scrolling, I saw comments like, "looking for someone to buy my wknd2 pass!! half price need it gone, serious inquiries only!" It's a sad state for one of the Western world's biggest and brightest music festivals of the 21st century to be chewed up and spat out on Twitter days before it happens.

What used to be a solidly good music festival is now being wasted on the rich and beautiful—just like pretty much everything else that enters the realm of popular culture. And that's not to say that the festival has gone to shit completely: Blackpink made history as the first K-pop band to ever headline Coachella, and Bad Bunny gave two great weekend performances to rave reviews. Some festival goers actually seemed pretty pleased when Skrillex, Four Tet and Fred Again were announced as the "TBA" act in replacement of Frank Ocean, set to play the final act of the 2023 festival right after blink182. Labyrinth brought Zendaya on stage for a surprise performance in his Weekend Two set, which sent *Euphoria* fans through the roof. He did, however, also invite every autistic person's least favourite "ally" Sia to join him on his set, which I think dulls my rating of his performance a bit.

In fact, Coachella is so convinced of the ongoing success of their festival that despite growing troubles, there's murmurings that next year they'll start charging people for "weekend live stream passes". That's right, now people can pay to watch this shitshow from home. Fair to say, I won't be writing a Coachella article next year if that's the case: as soon as my research goes behind a paywall, you're all in the dark. In the words of our queen Vanessa, "sad, but like...inevitable?"

As someone that is not particularly music savvy beyond the realm of Disney Channel Original soundtracks, what I've concluded is this: if you're into music or fashion, you've probably got better festivals to pay attention to than Coachella. If you're into YouTube roasts and bitter commentaries making fun of rich people, buckle up your seatbelts for next April: things are getting good.



Crystal Chen

On being a musician and creative in Aotearoa



NANCY GUO

As your average Joe, everyday music consumers, our interaction and understanding of the music industry is fairly cloudy—largely influenced by the portrayals of musicians we see in films and media. This week, we spoke to Auckland-based neo-soul musician and creative, Crystal Chen, to hear about her experiences creating and releasing music, navigating the industry, and the lessons she's learned along the way.

Tell us about how you got into music.

"I've always loved music. Apparently when I was a baby, I would kick in my mum's stomach and when she would put on music with her Sony Walkman tied to her belly, I would calm down. Even as a kid, whenever I would listen

to music, I would pretend I was in a music video, as both the star and the director."

"In high school, I became a classically-trained singer and joined choirs and did shows like the Big Sing. I also experimented with different instruments. I tried the violin, the flute, the guitar, the xylophone, the trumpet, and the keys. I remember hating the violin. If I knew what I know now about the intersectionality of music genres and classical influences on modern music, I would've definitely kept up the skill, instead of being forced to play songs written by old white men hundreds of years ago."

"But playing classical music wasn't my thing. The training is super intense and it's not creative at all. You have to

play note for note and get the timings exactly right—no room for error, or creativity. I remember getting so bored in choir that I started harmonising randomly. The conductor instantly knew it was me and he told me off in front of everyone. It was a real 'fuck this' moment... ."

"Then I started making my own music on GarageBand and YouTube Beats and writing songs on my guitar. I knew that this was a bit of me and a way to express myself. The hard work pays off, and you can see that as you grow as an artist. It is a reflection of the people you work with, shows you play etc. This allowed me to see that this was legit."

What are some of your biggest musical inspirations?

"Lately, I've been listening to a lot of NZ music, digging through a lot of Tom Scott's discography with his past bands like @Peace, Home Brew, Average Rap Band.. And a lot of Jazz-influenced sounds like *The 25th of January* mixtape by Lucky Lance and Christoph El Truento. I also really love MOKOMOKAI's self-titled EP. In general, the all-time faves are Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Lauryn Hill, and Aretha Franklin. In terms of production, I really love OutKast and their influences."

"A lot of the time, my inspiration comes from films. I look at something as a whole in terms of visuals and sound. Aspects of my daily life and conversations I have with people will also inspire my songs."

Tell us about your latest single, let's kiss, not fight, what the process was like creating it, and your inspirations for this song.

"This song came to me instantly. It's one of those that you write in 20 mins, in my case - it was right after a fight with my partner at the time. The rest is pretty self-explanatory if you listen to the lyrics, I kind of went on a roll. I worked with Christian Tjandrawinata on it, and he let me record without a click-track and go from 6/8 to 4/4 to really accentuate the ebbs and flows of an argument, which I thought was pretty special. I also love the bossa nova groove."

What's your experience being a multimedia creative, and how do you blend different art forms in your various projects?

"I recently have been thinking about the different mediums that I use in my creative projects. They can all exist on their own as a single photo or a track but it's super special when they intersect. An example would be creating a music video for a song or films that combine all three elements of visuals, music, and writing. In terms of how do I blend? I guess that stuff comes naturally when one medium inspires the other."

What lessons have you learned while being in the music industry?

"The music industry is actually what I want to stray away from. I want to create without the stain of thinking what has commercial success or if it will fit the radio. There will be people who want to put you in a box and I have found it fun to prove people wrong in that sense, steer their expectations away. It's cool that way because you eliminate the people that don't fuck with you and attract the people who do, and that's where it's at."

"I think also, you have to be okay with being broke. I'm a film-photographer and musician, 'stay broke, shoot film' and 'stay broke, make music', are sacrifices I'm happy to make. When you get that paycheck though, for solid, genuine hard-work, it feels really good. For musicians, there are a lot of expenses such as studio fees, production, session musicians, mixing, mastering, then visuals and marketing, but there are always ways around it. It's financially unsustainable and it's sad that music is many people's side hustle, when they wish it could be their main hustle."

"I definitely feel this unspoken power imbalance as a female POC musician in a predominantly white cis male dominated industry. Sometimes I feel it when I walk into a room, I used to feel the need to prove myself before a session, which is shitty because no one should ever feel the need to do that. It's also shitty that in some cases, underprivileged individuals need to work twice as hard to get the same opportunities as others and I see that a lot in the industry. I just see that as a cue to work harder rather than it being a limitation—and it's nice because then the respect is earned rather than it being handed to you. It's all shifting now though, and with hard earned work, it's really cool to see more women and POC on the rise, in the film industry too."

Do you have any advice for anyone looking to get into music? Anything you wish you could share with your younger self?

"My advice would be to just do it! Try it and see if you like it, if it sticks with you... if you love it and if you get lucky, congrats! Now you have a new way of expressing yourself. If I could share

anything with my younger self it would probably be that 'hey curious one, you are doing everything you have dreamt of doing. Try everything. You are able to do more than one thing, even if you fail, that's a good thing. Know that being an Asian woman is a driving force. It's really a blessing that has been disguised until you discover that it is an important part of your identity.' There is definitely a lack of representation and I want to prove to myself that being an Asian woman won't limit, but instead empower me."

"I wish that younger me could see me in the future and know that it's possible. You can be angry and pity yourself that you have to work twice as hard as you to get the same opportunity as someone else. Or you can prove people's expectations wrong."

What keeps you motivated to keep making music?

"Honestly, it has been quite hard for me this past year to keep motivated, but my throat gets itchy if I don't sing for a while. I think what keeps me motivated is being inspired and getting out what I am itching to get out of my head. Although I don't make music for money, there are so many things that make me feel grateful for what I do, including working with people who I've admired for so long and earning their respect."

"Also the feeling of being on stage, it's an incredible feeling. Once you're up there, you're in this zone, you discover another version of yourself that only comes out when you're on stage and I'm like 'I love this bitch!' You just wanna have a good time and give people a good time, you're in this flow state. That's what I live for. Nothing else matters in that moment. I'm very grateful for my band when I'm performing, the effort as a whole is so rewarding."

What can listeners expect to hear next?

"Hmm, I really don't know. I might put out a 5 minute storyline song that I rap in, or a 70s soul kinda track, or a really sad one, who knows."

Yellow Magic Orchestra:

THE NUMBER ONE DANCE BAND OF TOKYO

In Memorial of the Japanese Genre-Pioneering Powerhouse



LEWIS CREED

One of the most influential yet obscure bands ever was arguably Yellow Magic Orchestra (YMO). The electronic supergroup was formed in 1978 by three absolute legends of the Japanese music scene: *Haroumi Hosono*, *Yukihiro Takahashi* and *Ryuichi Sakamoto*. Although YMO was intended to be just a one-off experiment, the group captured lightning in a bottle in 1978, snowballing into a "Beatles-like" success inside Japan and modest commercial success internationally at the dawn of the 1980s. Their sound combined cutting-edge technology, catchy rhythmic dance beats, and expert musicianship that was incredibly influential on the fledgling genres of synth-pop and hip-hop. During the six years YMO were active, the three members released an insane 26 studio albums alongside touring, acting, and playing as session musicians. But even after YMO, they didn't slow down at all. Across their careers, the trio released over 165 albums. About half of that staggering figure comes from maestro Sakamoto's output alone. With the recent passing of both Takahashi and Sakamoto earlier this year, I felt compelled now more than ever to tell more people about their wonderful music that I love so much. No matter what genres you're into, their influence will be present, and there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Yellow Magic Orchestra's Influence and Legacy:

YMO were key, but often overlooked,

pioneers in both electronic and hip-hop music. Their 1978 self-titled debut album, *Yellow Magic Orchestra*, was the first to use the Roland MC-8 Microcomposer, an early music sequencer subsequently used by all the prominent early electronic artists, including *Kraftwerk*, *Giorgio Moroder*, and *Tangerine Dream*. Perhaps the great, great grandfather of GarageBand, this sequencing technology was so basic back then that when YMO performed live, they had a dedicated programmer who would frantically write out code between songs! In 1981, at the peak of their popularity, YMO envisioned the future of popular music with two cutting-edge albums which provided the foundation of the sound of hip-hop. The album cover of the first, *BGM*, features the invoice for all the electronic equipment they bought to create the record, which reaches a grand total of 850,000 NZD adjusted for inflation! *BGM* was the first album ever to use the heartbeat of hip-hop: the Roland TR-808 drum machine. Some of 808's subsequent users include *Kanye*, *Rihanna*, *Daft Punk*, *Marvin Gaye*, *Talking Heads*, *Whitney Huston*, *Genesis*, *New Order*, and countless others. *BGM* also featured the first ever Japanese rap song, *Rap Phenomena*, making YMO the first hip-hop group from Asia. Their other 1981 release, *Technodelic*, was also the first album produced almost entirely out of samples and loops, a technique central to today's hip-hop, rap, and pop music. Without sampling, many hits by artists such as

Tyler, The Creator, and *Drake* simply wouldn't exist.

Besides being made with the latest technology, YMO's songbook is full of upbeat, catchy tunes and futuristic, genre-bending sounds which did not go unnoticed internationally. Their debut single, *Firecracker/Computer Game*, charted internationally and was an early breakdancing hit. Since then, it has been sampled by *Mariah Carey*, *De La Soul*, *Jennifer Lopez*, and *Afrika Bambaataa*. Following up on their impactful debut, the trio released 1979's *Solid State Survivor*,



perhaps YMO's most well-known record outside Japan. It features an electronic version of *The Beatles'* song *Day Tripper* and lowkey spawned the name for the genre of 'Techno', often said to be derived from *Technopolis*, written by Sakamoto. Another of his tracks on the album, *Behind the Mask*, which was made for a Seiko watch advert, would go on to be covered by *Michael Jackson*, *Eric Clapton*, *The Human League*, and legendary session keyboardist *Greg Phillagenes*. The album also features my gateway drug to the YMO-verse, *Rydeen*, which I discovered via a cover by *Tee Lopes*, the composer of the banger soundtrack of the 2017 video game *Sonic Mania*. All it takes is one listen to hear YMO's monumental influence in early video game music of the 1980s and 1990s. They've all actually made video game music, too, of course.

“The Humming Head-Honcho”, Haroumi Hosono:

The bassist and leader of YMO, Haroumi Hosono, is one of the key figures in the history of modern pop music in and outside Japan, drawing on influences across many genres, including pop, rock, and electronic. He is most definitely a “musician's musician”. Numerous contemporary

popular artists have cited Hosono's work as a big inspiration, such as *Mac DeMarco*, who jokingly said that his music career has just been an attempt at “ripping [Hosono] off.” Oh, and when *Harry Styles* heard “Harry” Hosono's solo debut album, *Hosono House*, he instantly fell in love with it and “thought it would be really fun to make an album called *Harry's House*.” Need I say more?

“The Drip and Drum King”, Yukihiro Takahashi:

The drummer and vocalist of YMO, as well as a seriously sharp-dressed man, Yukihiro Takahashi's musical career started in the glam rock group *Sadistic Mika Band*. The band had a brief moment of international success in 1975, which led them to open for *Roxy Music*. Takahashi's career has been characterised by his openness to collaborations, such as his supergroup *METAFIVE* and the English New-Wave band *Japan*. He is often cited as the glue between Sakamoto and Hosono's egos during the YMO years. His solo career is criminally underrated compared to his YMO compatriots (and between you and me, he's the one I have the most LPs of), so by reading this, you are now obliged to listen to at least one of his songs! Try *Drip Dry Eyes*. (Ha, see what I did there, this section's title, his fashion sense, no? Nevermind...). Rest in peace.

“The professor of the synthesiser”, Ryuichi Sakamoto:

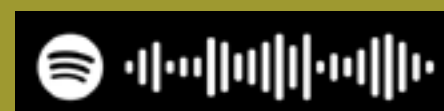
The keyboardist of YMO, Ryuichi Sakamoto, had a Master's Degree in World Music and went on to win a Grammy, a BAFTA, an Academy Award, Golden Globes and many other awards for his music. He was an avant-garde pop star with model-like looks and was one of my mum's imaginary boyfriends! Sakamoto's career was the epitome of prolific: he composed the soundtrack for over 46 films and TV shows and acted in several. He starred alongside (and even kissed) the starman himself, David Bowie, in the 1983 movie, *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence*, the main theme of which is Sakamoto's magnum

opus, fyi. The movie was partially filmed just down the road near the old Auckland train station by Spark Arena, so there's your Kiwi connection. His music has even been used in soundtracks he didn't compose, such as *MAY in the Backyard*, which was used in the 2017 gay romance film *Call Me By Your Name*.

Throughout the 1980 and 1990s, his solo albums were primarily synth-pop with a strong experimental streak, blended with global sounds. However, by the late 1990s, he moved away from pop and focused on more minimalist, classical and ambient pieces. Sakamoto was also an activist, using his influence and star power to raise funds for causes such as the *Zero Landmine* EP, which raised funds to clear areas in former war zones still littered with landmines. He was also outspoken about ending reliance on nuclear power after the Fukushima disaster, hosting a charity concert (where YMO reformed to play!). His music often featured anti-war lyrics, such as one of my favourites of his, *Undercooled*, which features South Korean rapper *MC Sniper*. Btw, his latest posthumous single is a collab with *BTS' SUGA*.

In 2014, Sakamoto was diagnosed with cancer and spent nine years fighting it while still making music. His 2017 album, *Async*, and his final album, released earlier this year, *12*, are masterpieces. Ryuichi Sakamoto's music was always profoundly emotional and full of intriguing soundscapes. However, as the professor faced his own mortality, this took things to another level. When I first listened to *12* with my eyes shut in the darkness of my room, I was utterly immersed. I'm not afraid to admit his pieces have repeatedly moved me to tears. Ryuichi Sakamoto's music is the most moving I have ever heard. No other music has remotely had that effect on me, and I think that is special. Rest in peace.

You can find a selection of YMO's work on spotify using the code below:





The Superfreaks Get Super Freaky

A house party you're all invited to...



REBEKAH TREGONNING

It's that time of year again: the nights are drawing in, your summer savings are finally gone, and your friends are cancelling all of your plans in favour of midterms. Everything seems bland, boring, and a little bit rainy.

But wait! Can you see that in the distance? A glow is emitting from one of the houses on Ocean View road. It's supernatural, almost, superfreaky...

Finding myself in this exact position, I walked towards the glow, down the dark path shrouded in palm trees, and was greeted at the door. The sequin-clad figure showed me to a leopard-print bean bag, and it was time for my interrogation of the five-piece band to begin.

I managed to summon four out of five of the members: we have Zach, frontman, singer and longtime 'ideas guy', his brother Finn on the drums, Iain on guitar, new recruit Jamie on bass, and elusive sax man Sam. The five-piece are recent graduates trying to do music their way, and I'm intrigued by their absolutely bonkers vision.

According to Jamie, who attended many a gig before joining the band, a Superfreaks gig is an entire experience.

"It's a connection, an experience with the people fully in front of you. We've gone so digital as a world, but the Superfreaks remain a truly digital-less, unreplicable moment."

The band has taken their in-the-moment vibe so far as not to formally release any music, although I am reassured that an EP is in the works for the group.

Zach echoes what his mate says, telling me that the band is trying to be everything for someone, not something for everyone.

"When you come to our show, it's a synergy, it's an energy flow from the audience to us and back. We aren't looking for perfection, we aren't looking for fame, we're literally just trying to immerse ourselves and our audience in what we all love—the music, the sets, the lights, literally all of it. It's one huge passion project."

The passion is palpable in the room, although that also might be the wine I was served on entry.

I decide at this point that Iain and Finn have been far too quiet, and I want to know more about what led them to the SuperFreaks and why they've stayed. I sense a strong younger-brother vibe from Finn, so am curious about what it's like being in a band with your big brother. He tells me that their Dad instilled music and creativity into them and helps the band out too. I hear about the real family affair that it is, with Grace, Zach's girlfriend, doing all of the art and dad Ash hopping in on keys when needed.

A musician myself, I'm too aware that sometimes it's hardest to get started when you're obsessed with perfection. Iain assures me that the band is happy with imperfections, seeking instead to capture a moment in time rather than a theoretically perfect performance.

"It's not about people turning up and getting what they expected. It's about the ability to turn up alone, or with your mates, or stumble through the door unexpectedly. We've tried to create an experience that all of those people can enjoy and connect with."

It's a DnB mosh-hype you can sing along to and a house party that everyone is invited to."

I'm informed of SuperFreaks gigs of old,

with the band living in demolition-listed houses purely so they could throw gigs in the backyard then move out. The band also once performed at the top of a mountain at the infamous UASC lodge. Despite knowing nothing about the band, I'm proud of them for growing so fast into new venues. How could I not be—they're relatable, they're fun and funky, and I can see how much it means to them.

By far the most unorthodox interview I've ever conducted, I'm left musing on how the interview was, of itself, an experience that, just like Jamie said, is unreplicable. I left satisfied, but disappointingly, I did forget to ask them to play at my birthday party next weekend. Knowing that some of the band live together, I try to weasel a scandal out of them to catch a headline, but, sadly, nothing. Perhaps I'll interview them over a few beers next time...

Catch the SuperFreaks experience at the Tuning Fork on the 12th of May.

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PARIS BLANCHFIELD



MORGAN FLOWERS

Morgan Flowers is a solo artist based in Tāmaki Makaurau whose sound is a blend of alt-country and melodic chamber pop. While the sound may be a swirling mix of lush vocal harmonies, chorused guitars and echoing pianos, Morgan has a direct, personal and reflective lyrical style often telling stories that spring from the mundane and surreal in everyday life. @morganflowers_nz



NEIVE STRANG

Neive Strang has just finished up her 'Living In Two' Aotearoa Tour with a show at Whammy Backroom, captivating those in attendance with her hazy, eclectic sound that blends elements of indie rock and folk pop. Having released two albums, an EP and, most recently, the single 'Living In Two,' Neive's vast discography reflects her versatility as an artist, though her aptitude for introspective and emotional lyricism carries throughout. @neivestrang



MADS HARROP

As a neuro-diverse musician, Mads has been very open about her experiences with Tourettes, autism and anxiety, which are reflected in her strikingly vulnerable and personal approach to songwriting. Contrasting her potent lyricism with a sharp punk-inspired sound, Mads' music is unique, fiery and brimming with fervour. She's currently working on her upcoming album entitled 'Navigating the Brainstorm' which she will also be engineering and producing. She also plans to release her latest single, 'Harmonise,' next month. @madsharrop



JAZMINE MARY

Winner of the Auckland Live Best Independent Music Debut award in 2022, Jazmine Mary has burst onto the scene, opening for the likes of Gang of Youths, Billy Bragg and Kurt Vile. Her folky sound and poetic lyricism acts as a kind of vehicle for Jazmine to "understand parts of the beauty and ugliness of the world." @jazmine__mary



RITA MAE

After releasing a series of emotionally charged, alt-pop singles over the last three years, Rita Mae has spent recent months opening for the likes of Gin Wigmore and enthralled audiences at The Other's Way and RNV. Her debut EP 'Superfeelings' is set to be released on the 5th of May, with a release show scheduled at Whammy. As a former neuroscience student, Rita now acknowledges that "a relentless desire for escapism could be satiated by simply surrendering to it – and letting her insides spill out through songwriting and performance."

All Artists Can Be Found On Spotify





RETRO VALLEY

We are Retro Valley! A five-piece indie pop rock band from the Waikato.

We started out as mates in high school all in separate bands and genres. But in 2019, we were all looking for a new project together and started making music for fun.

We like to consider ourselves pretty laid back guys who just love to make music that we think sounds good. We listen to all kinds of music so we try not to discriminate when playing around with sounds and ideas. So as long as it still feels like what we are trying to portray, then we can always build from there. But for the most part our sound usually falls into the indie pop rock vibe.

We've just kept the ball rolling and trying to step it up all the time ever since. We love going all out, so we finish every set feeling exhausted. We have had a successful string of shows over the past few years to keep us busy here in the North Island.

ANY UPCOMING SHOWS/RELEASES TO PROMOTE?

We are excited to announce we have a song coming out on Friday May 19th called, "Backseat Lovers." A song that is too good to not listen to! Following the release we will do a mini North Island tour in July hitting Wellington, Auckland and Raglan.

WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE LOCAL MUSICIANS? WHO FROM AOTEAROA SHOULD WE BE LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW?

The Rvmes, Midwave Breaks, Summer Thieves, Coast Arcade, Rat Cafe and Casper just to name a few.

HOW DO YOU VIEW THE FUTURE OF MUSIC IN AOTEAROA? EXCITING/TERRIFYING/NEW/UNSTABLE? WHAT DO YOU THINK IT HOLDS FOR YOU?

RIOT GULL (Lucy): The future of music in Aotearoa is a bit scary but honestly I don't think it will stop me, I kind of need to make music to function sometimes. But it does decrease the possibility of me wanting to really take writing music super seriously as like my whole career.

No Comply (Fynn): I'm excited. I know how much talent we have in this bottom corner of the world and I know people are only paying attention more as time goes on. Worldwide talent thrives here for real. I think it just comes down to having better systems in place to channel it out. However AI definitely scares me as much as it excites me. Stay the fuck away from the arts.

No Comply (Ethan): Music might come back into the hands of the people rather than industry and celebrities. We could be writing albums on ChatGPT and generating original music on Google, being a famous superstar will mean nothing (as it should lol).



RIOT GULL

We are RIOT GULL (squaw). Ōtepoti riot-grrrl-post-punk-noise-pop band.

HOW DID YOU START OUT?

Gemma: Deborah and Lucy had been planning on putting together a new music project, something less man-centred and fun, which was missing in our local scene, and I got talking to them when we were all working together. We started to put together some songs and jam and when we were asking around about a drummer, we were super lucky to have Mads recommended to us! We had a few jams and practices and started putting together tunes and playing gigs.

We loosely refer to ourselves as a post-punk noisy pop band but we sort of just make things that we want to make or would want to listen to. We're not too strict in writing specific-sounding songs or trying to fit into a genre which makes it much easier for us all to give input and try new things. We love to introduce new sounds, features, and instruments where we can and just have a good time together.

ANY UPCOMING SHOWS/RELEASES?

Our album SCABBING has been out on bandcamp and spotify for just over a month now!

WHO FROM AOTEAROA SHOULD WE BE LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW?

Lucy: Gemma and I just went to a Hannah Everingham gig on the weekend and that was amazing.

Gemma: Yeah Hannah Everingham was so great, we also played with some amazing bands on our tour, Half Time from Kirikiriroa was a personal favourite. I'm also a huge fan of Pickle Darling.



Babe Martin

My name's Babe Martin

I have exited my week of delirium that was my Covid-19 infection and am now tapping away at these questions after eating some pie. Can't complain.

I've been writing and playing music since forever, but I suppose it officially started when I was six and the house my parents were renting came with a banged up piano which was so shit it wasn't even worth getting rid of. I've been playing piano and writing ever since. Gigging and recording music in Tāmaki has been a more recent development though, really just in the last six months.

DESCRIBE YOUR MUSIC!

Synthy, Julee Cruise, Twin Peaks soundtrack vibes. Sort of haunting and beautiful. I grew up singing in choir so the melody and emotion of a song is very important to me, as are the lyrics. I played my friend my tracks the other day and she said, verbatim, "it's giving Dido," and it also made her cry so make of that what you will.

ANY UPCOMING SHOWS/RELEASES?

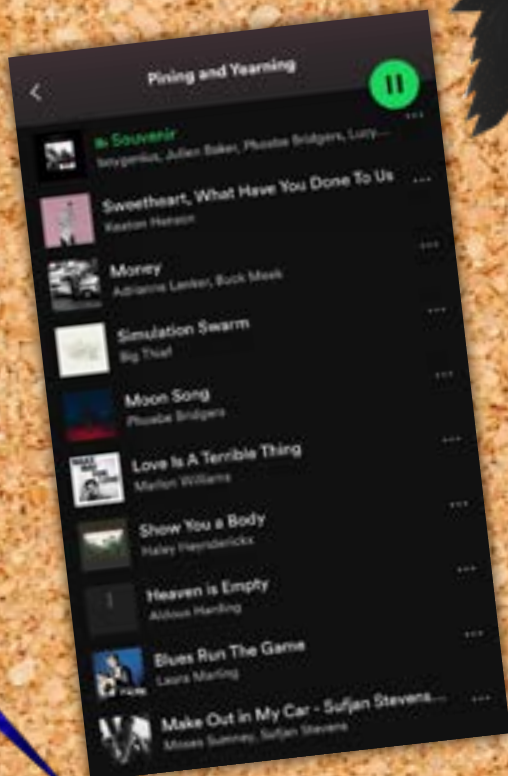
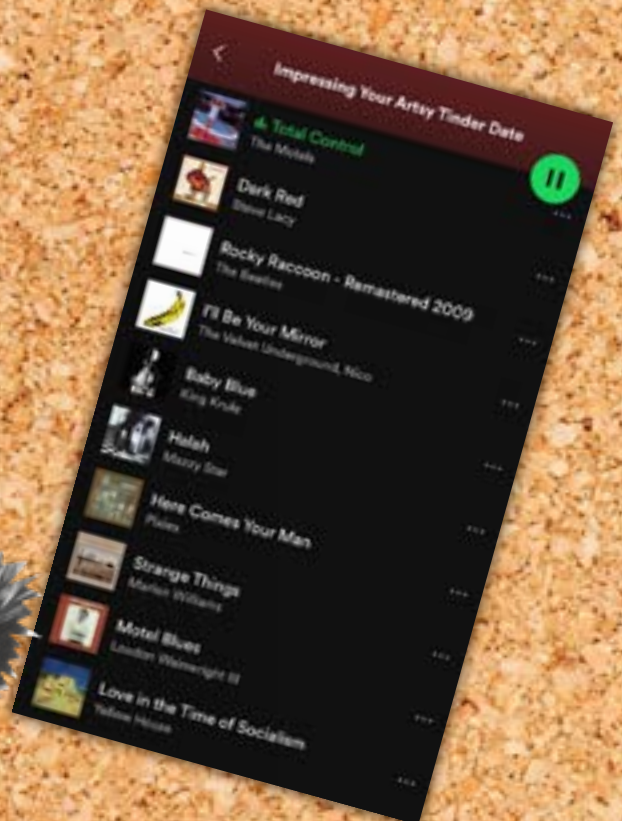
Yes! My debut single 'Knocked For Six in BHX' is coming out Tuesday the 30th of May, with my EP releasing later in the year.

WHO FROM AOTEAROA SHOULD WE BE LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW?

I think Amamelia's Bananamelia is one of the coolest albums in the world. Jazmine Mary's latest single 'Seagull' is as captivating as it is devastating. I love both artists very much. I'd recommend listening to 95bFM Breakfast with Rachel or any student radio station if you want to hear the plethora of amazing local music our city and motu have to offer.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MUSIC COMMUNITY/INDUSTRY IN NZ? WHAT'S THE LAY OF THE LAND FROM WHERE YOU'RE STANDING?

Babe Martin: I think there's so much talent in our music community here. I think Aotearoa and specifically Tāmaki Makaurau really punches above its weight creatively. Every weekend there's a life changing gig on. That said, it's important to go out and support the venues that make this art possible. Some of my favourites are Whammy / Wine Cellar, the Hollywood Avondale, Audio Foundation, and Basement Theatre. Any of those would be a worthy location for a Friday eve!



LIVE MUSIC IN NZ HAS BEEN THROUGH IT LATELY, WITH LOCKDOWNS AND FLOODING AND COST OF LIVING CRISES AND ARTS FUNDING DRYING UP. WHAT'S IT LIKE MAKING MUSIC IN THE END TIMES? DOES IT INFLUENCE YOUR MUSIC AND/OR YOUR PRACTICE AT ALL?

Vana: As a musician, making music in the current times has been a real struggle. The lockdowns, floods, and funding cuts have all taken their toll on the industry, and it's tough to stay motivated when it feels like everything's against you. However, I've found that utilising the power of the internet to market my music has been a game-changer. Social media platforms, streaming services, Twitch especially have all allowed me to reach a wider audience and connect with fans in a more meaningful way. In terms of how the current state of the world influences my music and practice, I find myself wanting my music to offer a sense of hope and escape for listeners who may be struggling, and I think that's more important now than ever.

THEIA

He uri teenei noo Waikato-Tainui
Ko Taupiri te maunga
Ko Waikato te awa
Ko Te Wherowhero te tangata
Ko Ngaati Tiipaa, ko Ngaati Amaru ngooku hapuu
Ko Tauranganui, ko Ooraeroa, ko Te Kotahitanga ngooku marae
Ko Kukutai, ko Karaka ngooku whaanau
Pai Maarire!

I'm Theia. I am a singer-songwriter who makes alt-pop (as THEIA) but you'll also find me releasing mournful alt-folk ballads entirely in te reo Māori as part of my reo rangatira project TE KAAHU (@tekaahuorangi). They exist on separate platforms because I felt it was important to give both the space they each deserve. Also, my nannies and aunties may not be overly into the in-your-face sonics and lyricism of some of my THEIA stuff. Haha.

I started writing poems when I was little. It was a way of processing my thoughts and all that was happening around me. Gradually, I started putting melodies to the poems, and so then I had all these little songs I'd composed. But it wasn't until later in my teens that I started to think about music as more than just a hobby. When I was studying at university in Christchurch, I started to get myself into studios and began recording songs here, which I'd then pitch to student radio.

Describe your music!

I'm definitely drawn to the experimental side of music and you'll hear that in my newer THEIA material. It's categorised as alt-pop, but there are also elements of hip-hop and alternative rock in there. But production is often paired with ethereal and dreamy vocals. I love the juxtaposition of dark and light. You'll hear the same ethereal vocals coming through in my TE KAAHU project, but these waiata are wrapped up in warm, nostalgic sounds of yesteryear. In my THEIA songs, I am often confrontational and challenging in the lyricism, while my TE KAAHU songs are filled with kupu whakarite (metaphor), pepeha (tribal sayings) and whakataukī (proverbs).

Any upcoming shows/releases?

I've started to release singles from my upcoming THEIA album. So you can expect more singles on the horizon and the album at some point. But I'm actually about to head off to North America, where I have some THEIA shows in June. I'll be back in New Zealand a bit later in the year and I'll have some exciting things to reveal then.

Who from Aotearoa should we be listening to right now?

There are far too many to name. But a couple of shout outs...Wiri Donna and Erny Belle. I adore Jazmine Mary. I am a massive fan of Proteins of Magic and Baby Zionov. And, keep your eye on the socials for @nympho. world. It's a dance and club night in Auckland run by my bestie and the DJ for my THEIA live show, Kylie @monoga.my.



HOW DO YOU STRIKE A BALANCE WITH THE NEED TO CREATE ART AND THE NEED TO MAKE A LIVING? DO YOU FEEL A PRESSURE TO BE PRODUCTIVE/ PROFITABLE? DO YOU THINK IT'S MOTIVATING, OR DESTRUCTIVE?

Retro Valley: I think basing one's musical success from the profits is a quick way to disappointment.

I think hitting milestones together as a band that you set is much more important. Also the quality of your outreach.

THEIA: When I was signed by a label, it was very apparent that I needed to do one thing to remain viable, and that was to make big pop songs that could be played on radio and that would stream well on Spotify. I understand that record labels are businesses. For me personally, that approach was pretty destructive and more of a hindrance on creativity than a motivation. You get obsessed with numbers and wanting the radio to play your music, which is really hard when they don't. So as hard as it was at the time, as in it really did feel like a break-up, parting ways with my label was like this massive release. I no longer felt pressure to try and write 'the next big hit'. I started writing music that felt more in tune with who I was and also I felt less afraid to experiment. Of course this means that I'm now making niche music for a niche audience and my Spotify streams are nothing like they used to be when I was signed, and so far there are no commercial radio stations in NZ that'll go near the new THEIA stuff. But there is something liberating about knowing that they probably won't, because it means you stop trying to please them and the only person you're trying to please is yourself. I felt the same way with TE KAAHU. I had no idea whether or not anyone would be interested but myself and my team believed so strongly in the kaupapa. We have never let statistics, charts, funding and radio play define this album and I am grateful for that, because had we, it may've been a very different record.



VANA

My name is Vana, as with a lot of artists, my journey started young. My dad was a musician so I grew up with a lot of guitars around the house. I found that I fell in love with early 2000s Emo/punk pop bands. I love playing the guitar and taught myself when I was 14. I even started a little punk band myself with a couple of friends. As I grew older, I started off my musical journey by singing on EDM tracks and doing vocals for some very talented friends. Being a vocalist definitely helped me find my footing in the music industry and taught me a lot about vocal recording production and how to write catchy lyrics. I started posting a lot on TikTok and found I grew a following. I've always wanted to give my audience a reason to follow me because there are so many talented musicians out there these days, so sharing my life, and my experiences felt like a great way to connect with my audience. I released my debut single "You're Not the Only One" early last year and was overwhelmed by the positive response I got back. It's truly addicting, releasing the music that you love, and that you would hope other people would love too.

DESCRIBE YOUR MUSIC!

I would describe my musical style as "Dark Alternative Pop Trap Swag Money Very Gay Sexy Maneater Sultry Goddess Female Empowerment But Not In A GirlBoss Way". I hope you get the vibe please thx xoxo.

As an artist, I would like my music to represent the feeling of listening to the devil on your shoulder.

I love representing those who embrace their dark, creepy little sneaky qualities and make music for people who wanna feel like a villain.

WHO FROM AOTEAROA SHOULD WE BE LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW?

I really like what Indy Skies is doing, she's an alternative female musician and does a lot of cool trap music. Some amazing musicians in NZ include Eliezer, Christabel, Chaii, Vikae - the list goes on!



ANY ADVICE/WARNINGS/ENCOURAGEMENT FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS WANTING TO PURSUE THEIR ART SERIOUSLY? ANY GOOD FIRST STEPS TO TAKE?

Eliezer: My best advice is to believe in yourself, persevere and find people that you can build with who share your vision. It's going to be a long journey, if you're going to do it right, and you'll need to have a strong heart, strong mind and strong people around you to overcome the challenges that this path presents. Take it one step at a time and fall in love with the process and the journey!

No Comply

Fynn: I'm an antisocial Namekian with a crippling addiction to Mouse hunt. I put hot sauce on most things, avoid politically charged conversations around the dinner table, and hate the word hate with a hateful passion. Known to most as Fynn Blackwood or Dende. I write the raps and speak them into microphones for our rap/prod duo NO COMPLY.

Ethan: The name's Ethan but my friends call me eboat.

How did you start out?

Fynn: Started out mostly writing poetry in high school. Played in a couple of different bands/groups and got into producing at the end of high school and then started making music with my brother Ethan in 2019. Dropped out of uni, pissed a lot of people off and didn't make a lot of money for many years but fuck we love the journey.

Ethan: Practising walking from an early age.

Describe your music!

Fynn: I honestly don't really know how to answer this apart from saying fun really. We take inspiration from all genres of music and all mediums of art and just do what we want to do. It's non-apologetic, authentic, and makes us feel good.

Ethan: I try to be as open as possible. To always try new things and work with cool people is the vibe.

Any upcoming shows/releases?

HECK YES! May 5th we are playing meow in Welly. May 13th we are playing Space Academy in Christchurch and May 26th we are playing in Auckland at Galatos! You can snag tix for WLG at moshtix, CHCH at undertheradar and AKL on the Galatos website. Jump on our insta for the linktree in our bio @omgitsnocomply <3

Who from Aotearoa should we be listening to right now?

Fynn: We have so much bloody talent in NZ. I'm listening to a lot of Unknown Mortal Orchestra at the moment. Bennee, Eno x Dirty, Wax Mustang, Chaos In The CBD, Swidt, Avantdale Bowling Club, Team Dynamite, Neil MacLeod, Harper Finn and Casual Healing just to name a few.

Ethan: CHEFMOB, Mara TK, A.B.C.



BANDI

My name is Bandi and I'm an artist/singer/songwriter. My music journey has been a fun hustle from the very beginning. I've been singing since I was a child, often singing with my talented older sister who plays the piano. I was involved in choirs, had a YouTube channel where I covered songs while playing guitar, and eventually started performing at benefit concerts and open mic nights. After living in LA for 8 years, I made the decision to move back to NZ and pursue my music career wholeheartedly. I had the opportunity to collaborate with NZ DJ/artist Cymbol and we created a hit song in an all-night studio session. The song received radio rotation and I got to perform it live on GeorgeFM, leading to more shows with Cymbol. This was my breakthrough, and since then I've met amazing musicians, artists, producers, and singers. I've been making music, writing songs, and have released over 10 songs now, some with over 100,000 listens. I recently dropped my debut EP 'Bittersweet' and am excited to be heading to Australia for my first international show. It's been an incredible journey so far, and I'm grateful for all the opportunities and experiences that have brought me to where I am today.

DESCRIBE YOUR MUSIC!

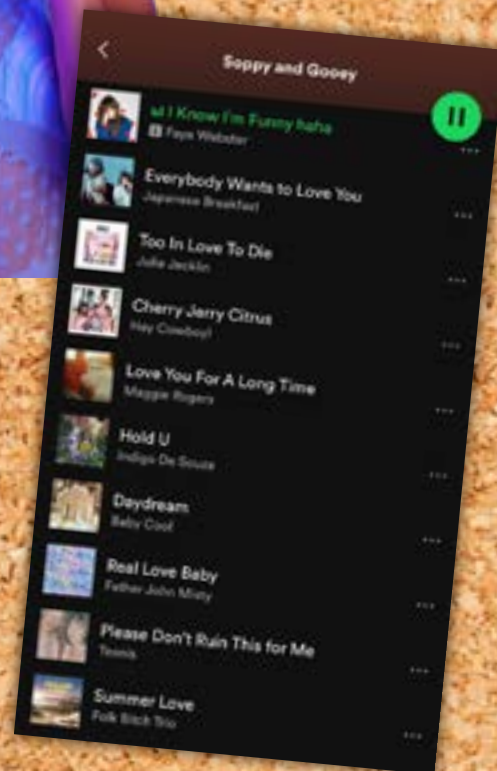
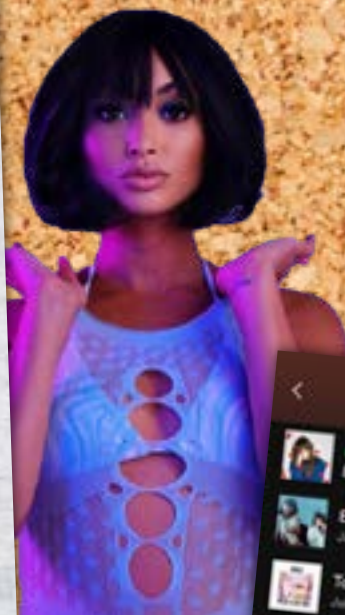
My music/artistry is a unique blend of bubblegum pop and soulful R&B, with a vibe similar to artists like Doja Cat, Ariana Grande, and Cassie, but with my own 'Bandi' twist. My visuals, aesthetics, and outfits are often bright and over-the-top, and I love incorporating candy and vibrant colours into my shows. Overall, my music has a fun and energetic feel, with a touch of my own distinctive style.

ANY UPCOMING SHOWS/RELEASES?

I'll be performing at my good friend Eliezer's 'Kingdom Come Tour' in Auckland on Friday May 12th. The lineup includes a diverse range of talented artists, with a mix of hip hop, rap, pop, and R&B. It's going to be an epic night, so make sure to get your tickets ASAP!

WHO FROM AOTEAROA SHOULD WE BE LISTENING TO RIGHT NOW?

My favourite local musicians at the moment would be obviously Eliezer because he is so damn talented. Aidan Fine, his music is stunning! Sam V, one of the most incredible singers, and BAYNK—he makes banger after banger.



DO YOU FEEL SUPPORTED AS AN ARTIST IN AOTEAROA? IF NOT, WHAT DO YOU THINK AN INDUSTRY SUPPORTIVE OF LOCAL MUSIC LOOKS LIKE?

Bandi: As an artist in Aotearoa, I feel both supported and unsupported. While there is room for improvement in the local music industry when it comes to supporting local artists, there are also limitations. For example, radio rotations can be selective and may not feature enough New Zealand artists, both female and male. It would be great to see more avenues for boosting local talent and showcasing the wealth of talent that exists in NZ.

Eliezer

Hey, what's up! My name's Eliezer, I'm an artist based in Auckland. My journey has been a rollercoaster so far to say the least, a lot of ups and downs and challenges along the way. But with that comes a lot of growth, progression, and evolution. I started out writing poems as a kid, that evolved to writing raps as a teenager, and then when I was 20 I started making my first songs.

Describe your music!

My music is a variety of vibes and genres but I predominantly make rap/hip hop music. I've been compared to Mac Miller and Russ a lot but I do like to dabble in a lot of different sounds.

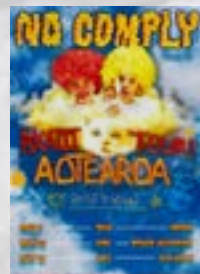
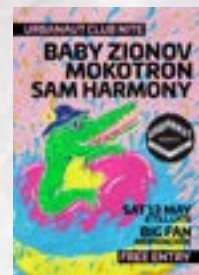
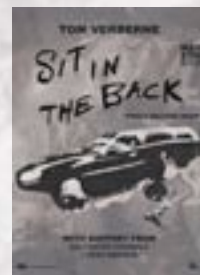
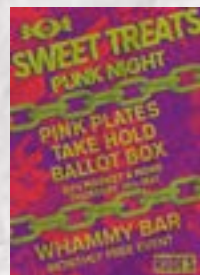
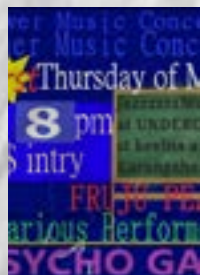
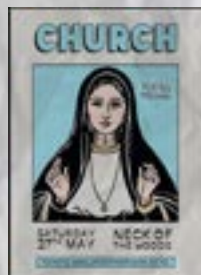
Any upcoming shows/releases?

We just released an album called "Kingdom Come" and we begin touring NZ with our first show in Hamilton April 29th, Wellington May 4th and Auckland May 12th at Whammy Bar!

Who from Aotearoa should we be listening to right now?

There's heaps and obviously I'm gonna be a bit biased to my friends. With that being said I really like: Leisure, Aidan Fine, Ash Supe, Luke-W, Mr O600, OD, Lil Bubblegum, Abdul Kay, OHNINE and many more.

ur gigging guide to nz music month ur welcome mwah <3



MAY 4

Shoosless Alongside Elliot And Vincent - **Thursday May 4th, 8:00 PM @ The Wine Cellar**

Psycho Gab, Fruju Peak And Ansembled Music Ensemble - First Thursdays - **Thursday May 4th, 8:00 PM @ Underground**

MAY 5

Rita Mae - EP Release Show, **Friday 5th May, 8:00 PM @ Whammy**

Tom Verberne - 'Sit In The Back' Release w/ Salt Water Criminals and Heidi, **Friday May 5th, 8:00 PM @ The Wine Cellar**

Riffs N Waves, **Friday May 5th, 7:30 PM @ Big Fan**

MAY 6

Auto Angel, Baby Zionov, Hybrid Rose - Angels On Tour, **Saturday May 6th, 9:30 PM @ Whammy**

Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs - When The Lights Go, **Saturday May 6th @ Powerstation**

RUEL - 4th Wall World Tour, **Saturday May 6th @ Auckland Town Hall**

MAY 7

Late to Chelsea, Strategist Wang, and BEACHWARE - No Conformity - **Sunday May 7th, 6:00 PM @ Big Fan**

MAY 9

Wu-Tang & Nas - NY State of Mind Tour, **Tuesday May 9th, 7:00 PM @ Spark Arena**

MAY 12

Eliezer - Kingdom Come Tour 2023, **Friday May 12th, 8:00 PM @ Whammy**

Lerm World Vol.1, **Friday May 12th, 9:45 PM @ Whammy**

Napoleon Baby! - Single Release Show, **Friday May 12th, 8:00 PM @ Cupid Bar**

MAY 13

Soft Plastics - Saturn Return Album Release Tour, **Saturday May 13th, 8:00 PM @ Whammy**

Urbanaut Club Night - Baby Zionov, Mokotron, Samuel Harmony, **Saturday May 13th, 8:00 PM @ Big Fan**

Sin & Wise Fools - KINK - **Saturday May 13th, 11:00 PM @ Las Vegas**

MAY 18

Salt Tree (WA) - AU/NZ Tour - **Thursday 18 May, 7:00 PM @ The Wine Cellar**

BALLOT BOX, PINK PLATES and TAKE HOLD - Sweet Treats Punk Nights - **Thursday May 18th @ Whammy**

MAY 19

Georgia Lines - Monopoly Single Release All Ages Show, **Friday May 19th, 7:30 PM @ Big Fan**

MAY 20

Offal Pit Stiletto, Brain Gun, and Shotgun The Couch - **Saturday May 20th, 8:30 PM @ UFO**

MAY 25

Bryony Matthews - We're All The Same Album Tour - **Thursday May 25th, 7:30 PM @ The Wine Cellar**

MAY 26

NO COMPLY - BKATIT Tour - **Friday May 26th, 8:00 PM @ Galatos**

The Larry Normans - 'COUP DE GRÂS' Single Release Party, **Friday May 26th, 8:00 PM @ Anthology Lounge**

MAY 27

Tiny Ruins - Ceremony Album Release Tour, **Saturday 27 May, 7:00 PM @ Hollywood Avondale**

Church - **Saturday May 27th, 10:00 PM @ Neck of the Woods**

MAY 29

Weyes Blood - In Holy Flux Tour, **Monday 29 May @ Powerstation**

SPACES

UNDERGROUND

Doubling as a live music venue and multipurpose space for music making, photography, film and video projects, Underground provides local artists with the opportunity to produce creative works across a variety of different mediums.

BIG FAN

Another multipurpose space dedicated to supporting artists in Tāmaki Makaurau is Big Fan, a not-for-profit offering world-class recording studios and a live music venue. Run by all-star producer Joel Little and his wife Gemma, this space is for musicians at any and all levels who want to see what they're really capable of.

MOVESPACE

The 'third place' is an essential part of the artist life and ecosystem—not work, not home, but a space to create and come together with the community. Movespace is that place, a characterful old home on Dominion Road open to creators of all types. With affordable hot-desking, recording equipment, a beautiful rooftop terrace for gigs, and a hive of like-minded people, this is your one-stop shop!

NICE GOBLINS COLLECTIVE

Ever wanted to go to/host a live music show in a tattoo parlour? Now you can! The artist collective for the marginalised opened their home base in 2020, a comfy and cool studio that houses art exhibitions, movie nights, sick tattoo collaborations, and loads of live music. They've been really ramping up the frequency of their gigs lately, so be sure to check them out.

A waiata that has lost its meaning has lost its resolution to be sung.



TŪTIRA MAI NGĀ IWI: THE SAD TRUTH



HIWA PIAHANA

Tūtira mai ngā iwi, the nation's second appointed national anthem and go-to jam at rugby games, concerts & festivals, and at every school hall in NZ. We all learnt it in primary school and sing it at late night drink sessions. The waiata is beloved here in Aotearoa but little did we all know how upsetting the backstory of the song truly is.

Not to say the song is strangely sad with a jolly upbeat tune, but rather the song has a messy history. Curious? Then let's get into it.

Well to start, not many know of the song's origin. The waiata was composed by Canon Wi Te Tau Huata in the 1950s. The waiata was only passed on through classes and kapa haka lessons led by the composer himself. The Māori hymn soon gained attention to an unreasonable breadth that permitted a lack of ethics and respect of indigenous creatives. The extent to which the song had presented itself was unfortunately too vast in a country that was only freshly accepting of the native

people. So much so that the song was viewed as free content for the pākeha system to take as their own, allowing the Ministry of Education to feel a sense of possession and permission to adopt the song as theirs and have it published in school books.

Consequently, the song was forced into mainstream schooling, spread like a virus throughout society and pollinated among all NZ individuals. It can be said with confidence that the waiata Māori composed by the Tohunga was sadly colonised and corrupted.

Nonetheless, little to no one knew about the lack of consent when the song was published publicly, nor was it checked for accuracy regarding the Māori grammar and lyrical content.

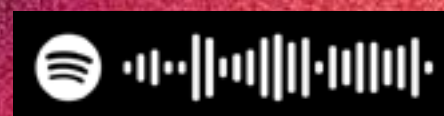
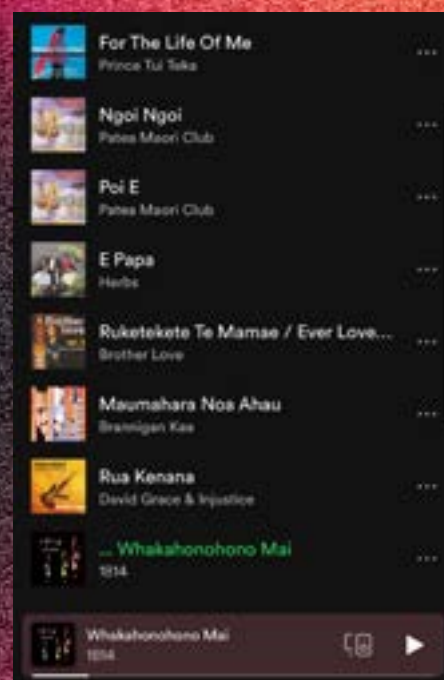
Yes. It's true. The vast majority of New Zealanders have learnt the song incorrectly and the popularity of the song drowned the voices campaigning for recognition. Notably the whānau Huata and iwi Māori. And so, the song branched out to collectives beyond primary schools and became unknowingly known by many.

There is significant symbolism directly correlating with the kupu of a Māori composition and by having a lyrically incorrect waiata proliferate and unfurl to the greater audience of the country, disrespect cannot be taken lightly when a song is sung incorrectly to a point of loss in its meaning.

The same concept and strategic

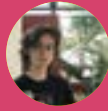
attempt at colonisation and corruption can be applied similarly to the haka 'Ka Mate' written by the chief Te Rau Paraha which holds the title "colonised physicality". Tutira Mai Ngā Iwi is or should be equivalently recognized as cultural appropriation and an example of appropriated and mediated indigenous tradition

Lets get it right folks, let's learn the correct lyrics and let's learn to learn more about the history behind Māori waiata.



The Streaming Scam

How Spotify sucked the money out of music



SPIKE KEITH

For musicians, the current landscape of music has become pretty dire. While Aotearoa-based musicians have always had to contend with small local audiences and parasitic major labels, the situation has only gotten worse since the streaming revolution of the 2010s. The number and range of venues has fallen significantly, with many either close to shutting or already gone. It's a similar story with other essential facets of a healthy scene like independent labels, music journalism platforms, record stores and radio stations.

Of course, music scenes ebb and flow as styles come and go, but the systemic devaluation of music through the rise of streaming has played a major role in this downturn. Musicians earn substantially less through their releases—with income sources like physical media and radioplay being completely gutted, and streaming offering increasingly smaller royalties. The ease of accessing music online has done wonders for its discovery and appreciation, but streaming has attempted to turn that discovery into an algorithmic torrent of endless background consumption.

The collapse of major labels in the early 2000s, along with the proliferation of peer-to-peer file sharing programs like Napster, opened the door for Spotify in the mid-noughts to offer itself as an alternative. Instead of the pay-per-song model of iTunes, users pay a flat subscription to access the same library. With significant investment from private capital, Spotify was able to get major labels like Sony and Universal on board, and cement itself as a vampiric middleman between musicians and audiences. Those same labels now hold about 7% of Spotify's stock, and negotiate exclusive royalty rates for their artists. Consequently, it's why major label tracks make up a vast majority of the biggest official Spotify

playlists.

For the vast majority of musicians, streaming is not at all a viable source of income. It's possible in theory, but you're effectively losing money on paying for the privilege to be inside the ecosystem. To get onto streaming services, you can't go directly to services and submit your music. Instead, you have to pay a third-party company to "distribute" your music, with most requiring ongoing subscriptions lest they delete your career overnight. One of the most ubiquitous of these distributors, DistroKid, is partially owned by Spotify, making this entire process the first stage of a mean green pyramid scheme.



This arrangement has locked music into a walled garden, with artists being paid shrinking pittances while bound to the machinations of opaque algorithms, forced to stay in the system to be seen by audiences. Musicians are now unable to even entertain the idea of sustaining themselves off music, unless they're able to reach wild levels of success. Even then, it's still a paltry level of reimbursement. To make

minimum wage for 40 hours worth of labour through Spotify, you'd have to get 230,000 streams; you'd be able to make the same amount by selling about 30 vinyl records.

For the amount that Spotify relies on artists and their creative labour to function, it's staggering how little of that actually gets reinvested back. Payments to artists on the platform have only been shrinking since the company achieved market dominance. Like Uber and other "disruptor" startups, Spotify's business model is unprofitable in the long-term, but because they were able to destroy the competition, they squeeze artists for all that they're worth.

However, after the previous decade's boom cycle being blown on tech startups and monkey JPGs, we're now entering the capitalist economy's bust phase. Rising interest rates will no longer allow investors to kick the proverbial can down the road. At some point, Spotify will have to reckon with the inherent unsustainability of the current system, and the fact that they offer artists very little to incentivise them to stay. In the near future, it's not impossible to see artists doing to Spotify what people did to MySpace.

But before we get there, what can we do now? I don't think you need to burn your Spotify subscription, but you can support artists in other ways. Go out to live shows, get music you like from somewhere like Bandcamp, buy some merch (or a physical release if you're a "they're called records, not vinyls" kind of person). Actively seek out music, and share what you love with other people. When the walled garden does eventually collapse, maybe we can end up with an arrangement that properly values the labour of artists.

'HOW MANY B*TCHES YOU KNOW CARRY THEMSELVES LIKE THAT??'

Craccum sits down with the one and only Jujulipps



AMANDA JOSHUA

With hit singles like 'Hilary Banks' and the recent release of 'Saucy', Jujulipps is rapidly conquering the music scene in Tamaki Makaurau. Her music is impenitent but earnest - written with the intention of making listeners unlock self love and confidence. In between moments where (abandoning all guise of professionalism) I was asking if we could be best friends, I learned that she is a chai drinker in a city full of coffee addicts, a criminology degree holder, and a massive sweet tooth. From the rich tapestry of her ancestry and upbringing to her dream blunt rotation - how many bitches do I know who carry themselves like her? Not a damn one!

What can we expect from your upcoming music releases?

My single 'Saucy' and the music video both drop on the 14th of April! It's about working your confidence!! Listen to it to hype yourself up! I also feature in 'DO NOT DISTURB' with the wonderful ASHY which is out on the 28th of April. It examines that feeling of closing an old relationship; not needing that energy any more!

Speaking of old relationships, what do you consider red flags?

Everyone is intent on jumping from person to person: and yes, do your thing and have your fun! But personally I will not waste my time on people who can't meet me at my level or my standards. My father always treated my mum with utter devotion and respect

and I won't settle down for anyone who is not all for me!

In your Rolling Stone interview you said that "if you understand who you are, you can go anywhere you want to". What are moments in your life that led you to understanding who you are?

It was a culmination of many moments, but being raised in South Africa, where my family and I spent many years as refugees had a massive impact on my perspective of the world. Every 3 months we'd stand outside court with tens of thousands of other people to get a stamp that said we could stay in the country for another few months. The instability wasn't easy, but I got to see so many different kinds of people and what they were going through. Whether it's driving my car, going to uni or jumping onstage, I'm aware of my parent's sacrifices and I am so grateful to be doing what I'm doing! Those aren't options for all women in the world and they wouldn't have been options for me if I was still a refugee. I am a passionate and ambitious person because what drives me is how grateful I am to be here.

Over chai and caramel slice, Juju chats about how 'Hilary Banks' is a message to women of colour that "it's okay to be bratty!". "In the sense that the world will make you feel like you have to accept less - lesser treatment, lesser prospects in life. NO YOU DON'T! Go get what you want!"

You've spoken a lot about wanting to empower listeners to feel good

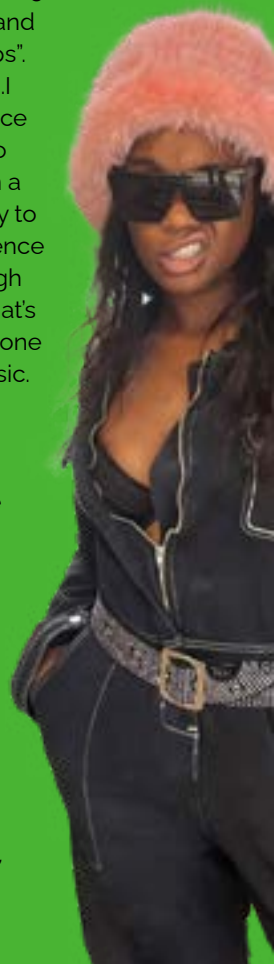
about their ancestry. What was your journey to feeling that pride and what advice would you give people who are still struggling with that journey in a westernised context?

"Got the key to confidence, giving it to those who lack, locs so long they offend the white eyes" lyrics from Juju's latest single 'Saucy'!

I went to high school in the South Island where there weren't many people who looked like me - it's actually how I chose my stage name! I was 12 and some Year 13 boys came up to me and laughed at my "juju lips". I remember thinking '...I know! I know I have nice big lips!'. I was lucky to love my features from a young age, I was lucky to have a natural confidence that carried me through those experiences. That's why I want it for everyone who listens to my music. I secretly thought to myself, you know what? I AM Jujulipps. You're yelling it on the playground now, and you'll be yelling it at a stage one day!

People love to make fun of natural features and then get lip filler!

'It ain't about them girl,



it's more about you, I hope you know that they envy you!"

Yeah! And those guys have girlfriends with filler now and that's wonderful, but it's funny how things that were once shamed have become trends. I didn't have too many of those experiences because I was naturally confident and my English wasn't accented. But I look back and feel horrified that my older siblings had it harder than me. Why? Because I was assimilated enough to not make people uncomfortable? I'm grateful for having had my developmental years in the South Island rather than in diverse, multicultural Auckland. It made me strong. *There is nothing I regret going through.*

I would tell people that we all have different journeys of accepting ourselves. But it is already inside you. Understand who you are and that cultural pride will follow. I know as I occupy this space in Aotearoa; I am not Tangata Whenua, but I am blessed to be here and have these opportunities. When I look in the mirror, I don't just see myself, I see all my ancestors backing me! I would say: remember how many people are proud you're occupying this space and living in who you are, no matter where you're from!

How do you feel about the state of the music industry in Auckland? The monetary and political challenges?

What is really cool about the NZ music scene is that the industry is supportive of up-and-coming artists. They want to see you doing well, they love talent and they want good music coming out of Auckland. There are opportunities and funding schemes for POC and indigenous artists but unfortunately lots of people don't know how to access them and maybe they're not properly publicised. How viable is music as a long term thing? You don't know till you try! I remember sitting down and thinking: one gig paying \$200 can be rent. Spotify streams are rent! I may not be super rich but I've always known I wanted my life to

be exciting! I never saw myself with a 9-5, kids and a mortgage. That hurts my soul. It makes me happy because I remember being a confused, worried uni student who desperately wanted all the things I have now!

Dream blunt rotation (the question Juju thought about the longest)

First of all: LEGALISE WEED!! I want Queen Nicki there, Tyler the Creator, my manager Helena Bakker (though she would green out), you (**I was fishing for it**), Rico Nasty, Jacinda Ardern and Style Benda! Ooh and Post Malone! And Lil Uzi!!

Tell me all your hot takes (aka your controversial opinions)

- We should have changed the flag! We already spent all that money on it!
- Women in the industry have to work ten times harder than men. Imagine if I showed up on stage in sweatpants, no hair, makeup or choreo? It would not fly!
- We have tall poppy syndrome in Aotearoa. We adopt American culture too much. It's rare people in NZ make it big in the industry and when they do, we should get arrogant with it! We should be allowed to feel proud of our country's achievements, of our own achievements!
- Before my first big arena show with like 12000 people, I was so nervous, I looked into the mirror and asked myself what would Kanye do? Then I walked out like 'You're all lucky to see ME!'. I think sometimes, we should ask ourselves: WWKD?

Juju has a weakness for rewatching The Princess Diaries. Her incredible skin is achieved (annoyingly) through nothing but shitty 3-in-1 body wash. Several times throughout the interview she spoke of how grateful she is for her producer, manager and the entire village behind her artistry. Her light and energy made the lowly Craccum office seem a lot less humble, and I look forward to being arrogant asf when she inevitably lights up the charts: worldwide!

Check out our favs from the Ockham NZ Book Awards!

Kawai - Kawai:
For Such a Time
as This is the
remarkable
first novel by
respected
historian Dr.



Monty Soutar, in a series that reveals the role of colonisation in shaping Aotearoa New Zealand, balanced with an honest appraisal of the country



in pre-colonial times.

The Axeman's Carnival - The Axeman's Carnival is Catherine Chidgey at her finest



– comic, profound, poetic and true.



Always Itali-cise: How to Write While Colonised - A first book

of poetry from acclaimed Māori writer and scholar Alice Te Punga Somerville.



Jumping Sundays - Award-winning writer Nick Bollinger's deep history of the transformation of New Zealand life wrought by the

PUZZLES Music to your brain!

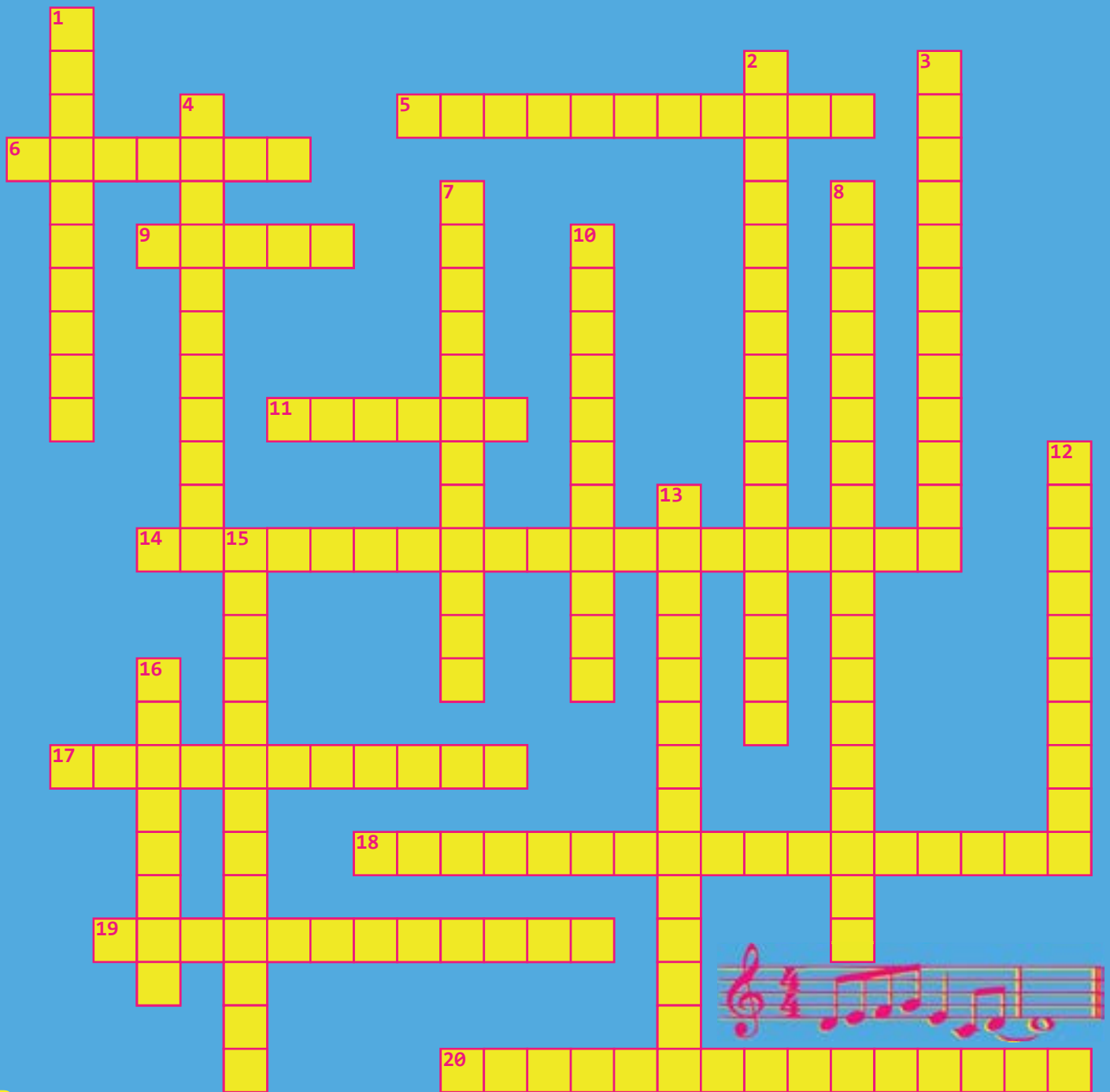
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 HEYJUDE WRYJGMMNKAEYOT JUMP
 LABAMBA IMJKJWGBELPP AMERICANPIE
 MAMMAMIA PCENUDPMUJAAPO LIKEAPRAYER
 STAYINALIVE NABRPDAEOAMPYU POISON
 VYNATOBENVFFMRLGYMCA
 QWPJHAA SZJRMMAA
 PWXIYLN ONE XJBIKYK
 VFAEW LAYLA OQCZE
 WKJU AFRICA XAPR
 KT WANNABE WN
 ITSRAININGMEN

Letters have been replaced by numbers. Each number represents the same letter throughout the grid. When you begin the puzzle, you will see that a few pre-determined letters have been given for you. Use these clues as a guide to deciphering the code

Code Cracker

	6	21	R	2	9	L		16		18	1	R	6	1	15	
		7	4	16			16	4	25			2	L	L		
	5	24	L	4		15	4	D	1	L		26	10	25	2	
25	24	L	L		9	2	R		1	15	1		14	4	6	26
2	20	D		9	2	5	1		20	1	17	25		9	7	4
R			14	2	15						21	10	25			10
4	8	1	R	F	L	4	9		3	24	L	L	2	15	1	6
11			6	1	2						2	24	R			L
10	6	1		R	24	3	6		25	L	24	3		26	7	1
1	L	14	6		D	24	3		2	24	14		23	4	4	6
	15	2	3	6		16	10	24		L	26		9	4	20	26
		24	R	5				R	4	D			4	20	1	
	F	L	15	24	20	16		20		L	4	9	1	6	26	



Down

- 1 I heard there was a secret chord / that David played
- 2 Ooga-chaka, Ooga-ooga / Ooga-chaka
- 3 Coming out of my cage / And I've been doing just fine
- 4 Well, you can tell by the way I use my walk / I'm a womans man
- 7 Look / If you had / One shot / Or one opportunity
- 8 All the leaves are brown / And the sky is grey
- 10 Dearly beloved / We are all gathered here today / To get through this thing called 'life'
- 12 Nice to meet you / where you been
- 13 Making my way downtown / walking fast
- 15 Tonight, I'm gonna have myself a real good time / I feel alive
- 16 Do you ever feel, like a plastic bag

Across

- Birds flying high you know how I feel / Sun in the sky you know how I feel 5
- Somebody once told me / The world is gonna roll me 6
- And now, the end is here / And so I face the final curtain 9
- Don't stop, make it pop DJ / blow my speakers up tonight 11
- Harry Truman, Doris Day, Red China, Johnnie Ray 14
- It doesn't matter if you love him, or capital H-I-M 17
- Hello darkness, my old friend 18
- To the left, to the left / Everything you own in a box to the left 19
- At first I was afraid, I was petrified 20

HOROSCOPES



ARIES

You're as fiery as they come. Learn to take it slow and calm down. Try listening to Tibetan singing bowl sessions, or if you're trying to keep it local there's a million puoro Māori playlists on YouTube for you to check out. Kia haumaru te noho, friend.



LIBRA

Hey airy fairy, Hairy Maclary. Please stop holding the group up and pick your karaoke song already. You're so indecisive I bet you couldn't choose between red or blue when playing SingStar. Who cares, not like you won anyways.



TAURUS

Taureans value all things beauty, love, and luxury. Break out the curated Karaoke playlist and make your way down to the aptly named Queen Street lounge, Luxury Karaoke. You give me classic vibes. I bet you have Snoop Dog on that playlist, don't you?



SCORPIO

Are you often labelled 'intense'? Well show them real passion and bring a piece of self written prose to the next sing song. I'm sure your mates will love the twelve minute monologue!



GEMINI

Hey two faced bitch. Break out that duet and just do it on your own, we know you want to. Go ahead and assign parts to each of your personalities. Which song are you choosing first?



SAGITTARIUS

Like the other fire signs, Sagittariuses have a zest for life and, to put it simply, cannot be tamed. This sign needs a release this week. Let them choose the driving music, or better yet give them a well deserved orgasm.



CANCER

This water sign is all about experiencing music in its entirety, from the lyrics to the beat to the way it makes them feel. Cancers will definitely become attached to a breakup song so be sure to keep the AUX away from them during road trips.



CAPRICORN

Two words for this sign: old soul. Still watches Facebook reels and reminisces for the 'good old days' (they mean Vine). Try giving them a break when they pull Sinatra out in the Karaoke booth, ok?



LEO

Think about your go-to karaoke song. Now think about your second go-to karaoke song. We can almost guarantee that both of those will be a variation of Mr Brightside, Toxic or a Spice Girls track. Basic much.



AQUARIUS

If you're looking for variety, an Aquarius playlist will give you exactly that. They're an unconventional sign who sees no problem in pairing Nightcore with Neo-Soul. It's weird but they somehow make it work. Wouldn't say the same for their meal pairings though.



VIRGO

Detail-oriented perfectionists, the only music genre that truly resonates with Virgos is classical music. We expect to hear more Bob Marley, Prince Tui Teka and Herbs entering your playlists this week. Happy jamming.



PISCES

Pissy pisces are known for being one of the more emotional signs of the Zodiac. This change of weather has really brought on their seasonal depression. Don't let them pull out the sad girl playlist and give them a kiss, a cuddle and a cuppa tea.

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