

VERMILION



COSY UP WITH OUR
**WINTER
EDITION**

MAGAZINE

GET TO KNOW
BRISBANE'S
BELOVED LOCAL
VENUES LIKE YOU
**NEVER
HAVE
BEFORE!**

HATI:
THE FEATURE
INTERVIEW
ON PAGE 22

VOL. 1 - 2025
VERMILION RECORDS



2025 Artist Roster

Alessandro
Beake
Elsewhere
Hati
Later Daze
Lui
Poppy Isabelle
Shamia Lily
Soleil
Tawa Drive
The Lost Heads Club
The Phosphenes
Wasted

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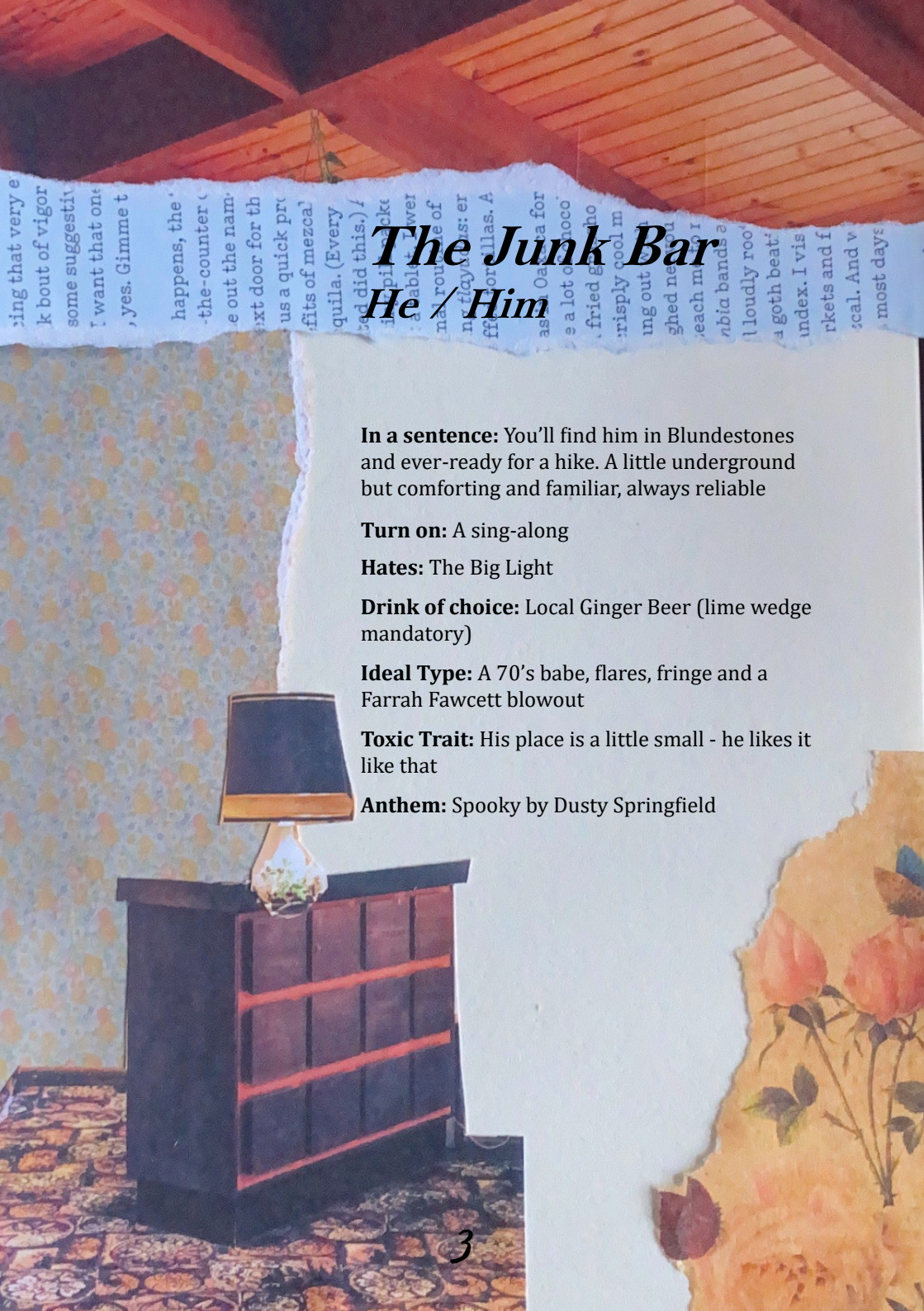
Acknowledgement of Country

This issue of the Vermillion magazine was created on Turrbal and Yuggera country. We pay our respects to the traditional custodians of the land and recognise Elders past, present and emerging. These lands have always been places of teaching, learning and storytelling.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land

Introduction

Vermilion magazine is created by local creatives, for local creatives. As the voice of Vermilion Records, QUT's student-run record label, we bring you the latest insights into emerging talent in Meanjin's music scene and broader creative spaces.



The Junk Bar He/Him

In a sentence: You'll find him in Blundestones and ever-ready for a hike. A little underground but comforting and familiar, always reliable

Turn on: A sing-along

Hates: The Big Light

Drink of choice: Local Ginger Beer (lime wedge mandatory)

Ideal Type: A 70's babe, flares, fringe and a Farrah Fawcett blowout

Toxic Trait: His place is a little small - he likes it like that

Anthem: Spooky by Dusty Springfield

Interview with...

★ ★ POPPY

Author: Hamish Vanvelthuizen

What first got you into music, and how did your journey as an artist begin?

I've loved music for as long as I can remember.

In grade 2, I did a school talent show and thought, "This is what I want to do." I started with clarinet in grade 3, switched to tenor sax in year 6, and played until year 12. My real journey began in grade 8 when I started writing songs and teaching myself piano. I was a perfectionist and had stage fright until the end of high school, so I kept a lot of my early work to myself.

Who are your biggest musical influences, and how have they shaped your sound?

Billie Eilish has had a huge impact—I've grown up with her music. Lately, artists like RAYE, Artemas, and AdELA have been inspiring. When I was younger, my mum always played Adele, Rihanna, and Ed Sheeran, and that influenced how I started writing.

How would you describe your music to someone who has never heard it before?

Piano ballads turned electronic pop—atmospheric, emotional, and ethereal.

What's the most personal song you've written, and what's the story behind it?

Remind Me is definitely the most personal. I wrote it during my first semester at QUT. It's about growing up and moving past your childhood struggles—accepting that you don't need to be perfect.

How do you balance staying true to your artistic vision while also considering what listeners might connect with?

It's tough. I usually write for myself, but I think honesty connects best with listeners anyway.

What has been your most memorable performance so far, and what made it special?

My band Elsewhere's first gig at a backyard mini-festival called Kaperrapolooza. It wasn't glamorous, but it was so fun—the energy from the crowd made it unforgettable.

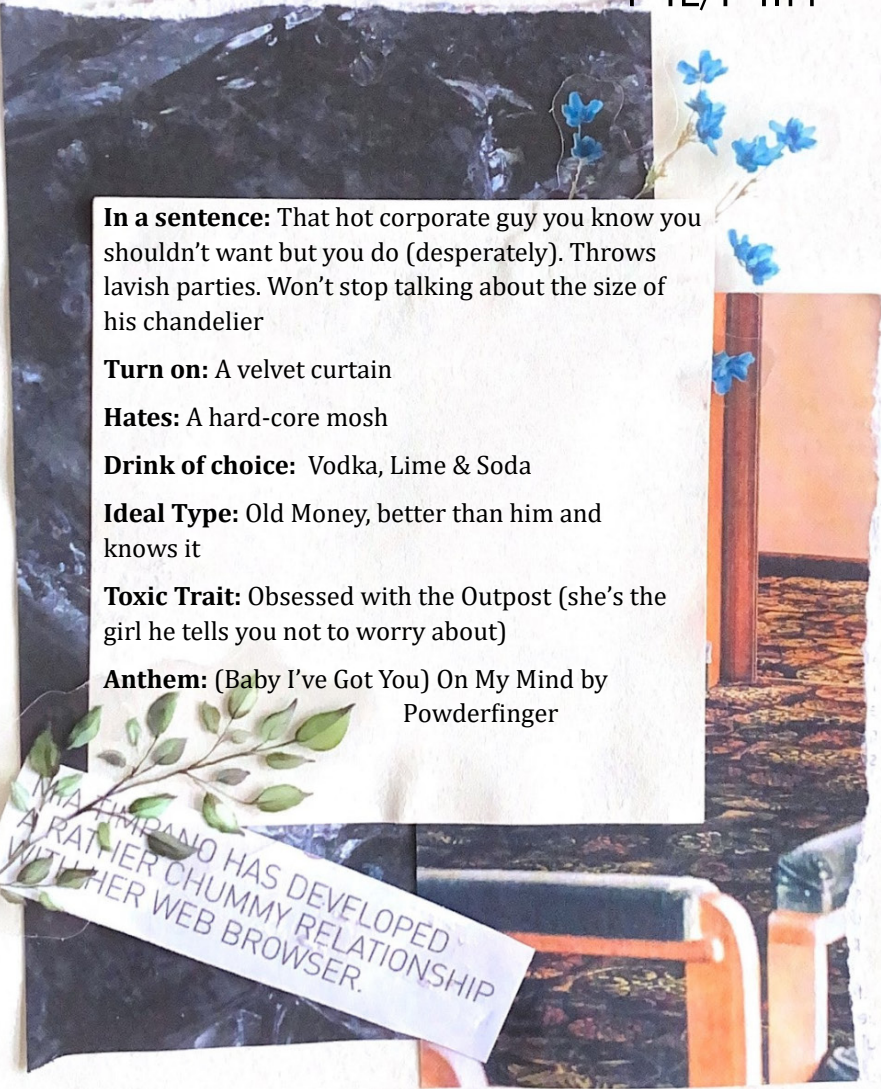
If you could play any festival or venue in the world, where would it be and why?

Glastonbury or Reading—those are dream festivals. Locally, The Fortitude Music Hall would be amazing. I've seen my favourite artists there and always imagined being on that stage.



THE FORTITUDE MUSIC HALL

HE/HIM



In a sentence: That hot corporate guy you know you shouldn't want but you do (desperately). Throws lavish parties. Won't stop talking about the size of his chandelier

Turn on: A velvet curtain

Hates: A hard-core mosh

Drink of choice: Vodka, Lime & Soda

Ideal Type: Old Money, better than him and knows it

Toxic Trait: Obsessed with the Outpost (she's the girl he tells you not to worry about)

Anthem: (Baby I've Got You) On My Mind by Powderfinger

NIA TIMPANO HAS DEVELOPED A RATHER CHUMMY RELATIONSHIP WITH HER WEB BROWSER.

Venue Dating Profile Authors:
Jessica Chate and Annabelle Barnes



The Outpost

She/Her

In a Sentence: She's glamorous, elegant, a Marilyn

Turn on: The unattainable

Hates: Feeling tied down

Drink of choice: An Old Fashioned

Ideal Type: Tall, Dark and Handsome

Toxic Trait: Has a thing with Fortitude Music Hall; it's not that serious though.

Anthem: Young and Beautiful by Lana Del Rey

WHY DOES MUSIC MAKE US FEEL...

Author: Jessica Chate

ALIVE?

Sunset at River stage. The first chord of your favourite song echoes across the open. A wave of euphoria swells in your chest, rippling into the air around you. For a fleeting moment, everything makes sense again—you remember you're alive, and why.

That deep sense of existence that music conjures. We've all felt it, or something close – a vivid reminder of who we are and what we're connected to. We shape our identities through the songs we listen to, the memories they evoke and the communities they form. But when it comes down to it, why does it make us feel so alive? How does it actually work?

Eternally inspired by this feeling, I set out to uncover the answer. I found it lies across three major realms of connection: the physical, the emotional (closely linked to memory) and the social.

Let's start with the physical; how does music literally evoke biological sensations that bring us closer to our bodies?

To begin, music is inextricably linked to dopamine release. Put simply, the same parts of the brain light up when processing music as those that respond to pleasure, particularly cravings and rewards (think food, sex and addictive drugs). A 'universal language' of sorts, this release occurs during especially emotive musical moments, evoking those 'chills' we know and love, also known as 'musical frisson.'

Side note - this also made me wonder about the dopamine deficiency in ADHD/neurodivergent individuals... Could there be a link between music's elevated dopamine-reward system and the high representation of neurodivergent folk in creative/music communities? It seems plausible - but that's a paper for another day.

I digress. When engaging with music, these dopamine systems fire up in conjunction with the brain's opioid circuits and the increase of serotonin platelet production, creating a literal chemical cocktail of feel-good effects. On top of this chemical brew, the brain's limbic system (the part of the brain that controls memory and emotions) lights up when we perceive music. This leads us to the next question: how does music make us feel so emotionally alive and elicit such vivid memories?

We already know that dopamine triggers an intense emotional release, but I found it particularly interesting to

learn that a big part of this release stems from our anticipation of familiarity. Even when we hear a new song, humans are thought to process songs through memory circuits, identifying recognisable patterns to predict the direction the song is headed in. We get that emotional hit from having our expectations confirmed or subverted. No wonder pop music is so universally effective, with its recognisable melodic structures and rhythms.

Of course, we each have our own individual musical tastes and styles that do this for us. Research suggests our musical taste is largely based on what we were exposed to growing up. In particular, the reactions we have to music we were exposed to over the emotionally charged formative period of adolescence (12-22) can be so powerful that they're easily stimulated even years later. It turns out there's a reason those high school songs always hit so hard.

This force is so potent and deeply rooted that it can even trigger non-communicative Alzheimer's patients to engage in sing-alongs and conversation when exposed to music from their youth. Pretty poignant when you think about it.

Not only this, but there's an intricate link between music and autobiographical memory. This type of memory gives us our sense of self and meaning in the world. Research suggests that hearing music associated with our past can evoke important information about the stage of life in which the song was relevant, inducing that deep nostalgic sense of 'knowing,' and in turn, influencing our own views about ourselves. I'm sure we can all agree that nothing makes you feel quite as alive as hearing that one song that reminds you who you are and where you've come from.

It's also worth noting that this is particularly powerful in musicians, who demonstrate denser grey matter in the brain's hippocampus, indicating especially intense, heightened music-related memories. Thinking back to all the glowing stories I've exchanged with my music-student peers about the life-changing gigs we've been to, I feel I've witnessed this research firsthand.

This interplay between music and memories not only justifies the correlation with emotions but also reflects the inherently social element of music, answering my third question. Research has found that musical rhythms are directly linked to brain rhythms, which in turn influence how we feel at any given moment. This means when you're a performer and you play something that moves a listener, you've literally synchronised your brain rhythms (how cute is that!)

Additionally, music impacts the brain's neurochemicals responsible for forging connections. Studies have shown that when people engage in music in group scenarios (such as singing in choirs), these chemicals and endorphin levels significantly increase. This enhances social bonding, with particularly high impacts shown in larger groups. This concept explains the electric rush you get when you're singing along with a big crowd.

And of course, we can't forget the deep-rooted relationship between the music we listen to and our social belonging and cultural aesthetic. The music we associate our autobiographical memories with (and thus our sense of self) forges the niches that become our communities.

It's no secret that we're inherently social beings. We're evolutionarily wired to feel the most human when we feel connected to one another. So, it's no wonder that when we feel these shared musical brain synchronisations and identities, we find ourselves feeling so alive.

So, next time you're singing along with a crowd or find yourself soaring back in time to a life-defining soundtrack, take a second to consider all the tiny ways your brain and being are quite literally lighting up, all to make you feel alive.

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RIVERSTAGE **HE/HIM**

first times, last times

Things

In a sentence: Crowd pleaser. Everyone wants him. Will either give you your best night or your worst

Turn on: Lighters in the air

Hates: Being told what to do

Drink of choice: Jack and Coke

Ideal Type: Anyone who doesn't show interest

Toxic Trait: Only ever been in long distance situationships

Anthem: If You're Too Shy (Let Me Know) by the 1975

FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

...HAST HAS COME TO ACCEPT THE SECOND-RATE SUSHI IN HER FUTURE.

10

A LITTLE BIT WASTED: GRIT AND GAZE AT THE BOT BAR

Author: Reanna Eke

Bathed in a purple haze—not the Hendrix kind, but definitely close—we watched Wasted set up with baited breath, anticipation buzzing in the atmosphere. The first chord split the silence, and for a moment, time stalled. Then it hit: loud, raw, and electric. From the first note, we were hooked.

Wasted is one of Brisbane's most intriguing new acts, and they know exactly what they're doing. Blending shoegaze textures, '90s grunge, and a wash of psychedelia, the band brings something both nostalgic and oddly fresh.

Since releasing their debut single, Anhedonia, last winter (a slow-burning gem), and follow-up 'Waves' earlier this year,

they've been quietly building a reputation through regular live gigs. On stage April 10th, they proved exactly why that buzz is growing.

Dustan Colliss (vocals/guitar), James Welding (lead guitar), and Ryan Dockerty (bass) deliver atmosphere, craft, and connection. With only two official singles out, most of the set was unreleased material—a rare and generous offering that gave the crowd a glimpse of where Wasted is headed.

They opened with a slow-build instrumental over Dustan's spoken monologue—a sort of poetic prologue that set the tone for the set. It felt less like a gig and more like being dropped into a story, or maybe a dream. From there, the band moved through a meticulously curated setlist, each track flowing into the next like chapters in a concept album.

It was immersive and deliberate, evoking the feeling of spinning a dusty CD you loved in high school—every track placed with purpose.

The final song, a self-titled anthem, was a full-blown crowd-mover. By the last chorus, the room had shed its inhibition. People were up, dancing, swaying—fully in it. It didn't feel like watching a band. It felt like being inside the music.

Even when the sound rig hiccupped mid-set, Wasted didn't flinch. No awkward silences, no panic—just effortless crowd banter and natural charisma. That chemistry between the three of them isn't just audible; it's felt. They're tight without trying too hard. There's a quiet confidence there, the kind that only comes from real connection and practice.

Wasted's set was wistful, loud, raw, and tender. They made the Bot Bar feel like a dive venue wrapped in velvet—and left us wanting more. Brisbane's music scene should keep a close eye on this band. They're not just promising. They're already delivering.

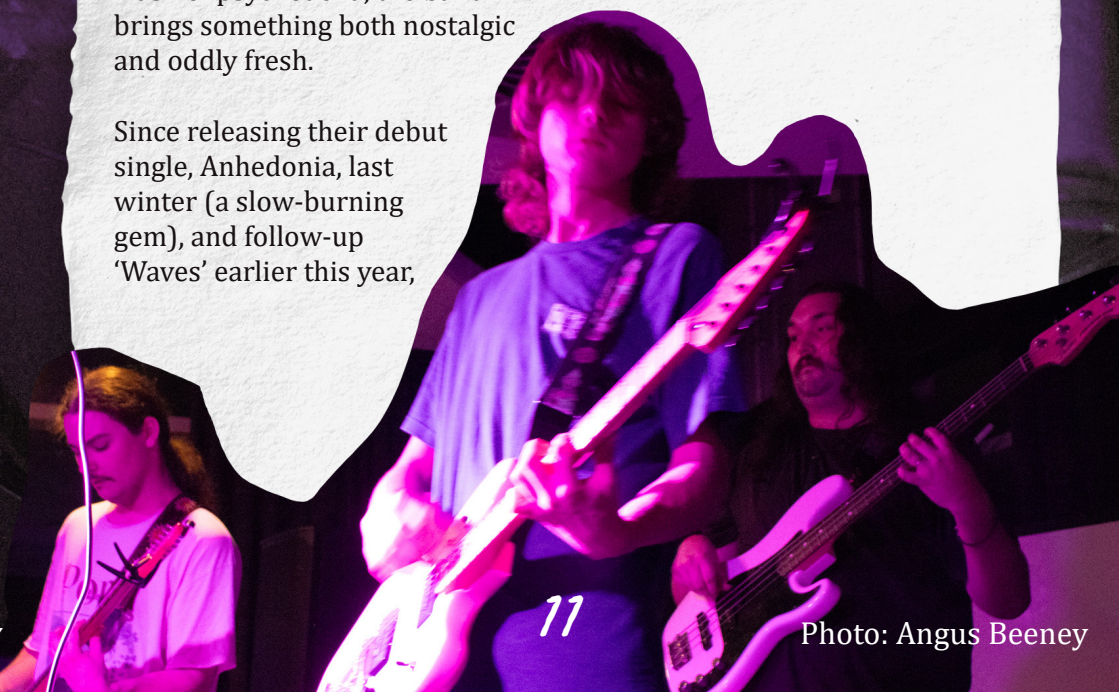
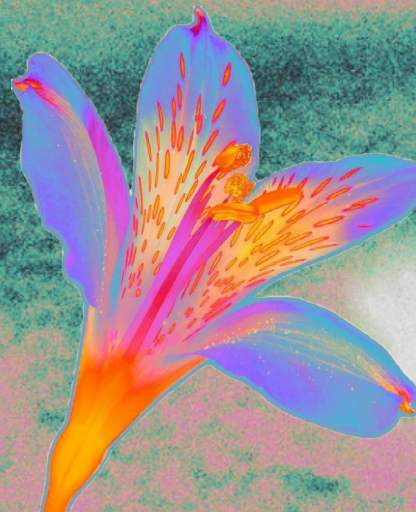


Photo: Angus Beeney



LATER DAZE: RIGHT NOW

Author: Brianna King

If you're looking for catchy songs and exciting beats, Later Daze are the band to keep an eye on this year. Formed in 2023, the five-man band from Brisbane's south-side have released five singles since combining their love for making music – and they're worth every listen.

New Friends, Rebel Dive, and Castaway are the absolute highlights of their discography so far. Their music is electrifying. Every chorus is the kind of catchy that's going to be stuck in your head for days. The lead singer's vocals are a perfect balance between scratchy and smooth, edged with an imperfect sound that gives his singing an interesting rawness.

Later Daze's music is classic Australian. The music that you blast on the way to Noosa with the windows down, the wind through your hair, the sun shining bright and your throat getting sore as you belt the words with your friends. It's warm, it's fun. Even as they bring higher energy to their beats, there's a simple depth to their lyricism.

Later Daze sing about self acceptance. About embracing youth and the future; looking ahead even if the path may be unclear. Their music is for the young and spirited, and those that want that classic 'garage' sound. They have something to say, and they're going to make you dance while you listen.

A special mention for Wonder – Demo, which flexes their ability to strip their sound back. The single showcases the singer's raw vocals and the group's thoughtful writing, showing a calmer side of the band that listeners can look forward to.

Don't be surprised if this band lands on Triple J some day soon. They're energetic, they're exciting, and they're so easy to get wrapped up in. One to keep an ear out for, get keen for future releases!



13



Interview with Later Daze

Has there been a specific moment or artist that made you realize you wanted to pursue music seriously?

Our debut headline show this year. When the crowd sang back the pre-chorus to Rebel Dive, it was unreal. We sold over 130 tickets. That was the moment it hit—we're really doing this.

How has your hometown or upbringing influenced your song writing and creative process?

Being from Brisbane, we've noticed there aren't tons of local bands who break through. That's fuelled us. We want to be part of the new wave putting our city on the map.

What does your song writing process look like?

It's organic. A song might start with a riff, melody, or even a random sound. We jam it out until it clicks—sometimes in 10 minutes, sometimes hours.

Who are your biggest musical influences, and how have they shaped your sound?

Our influences are diverse. Tj (vocals) draws from modern rap and indie artists like Dominic Fike and Tyler, The Creator. Lennon (guitar) is into atmospheric rock from Tame Impala and Pixies. Luka and Corey (drums and bass) lean into jazz fusion and funk, while Rocco (guitar) brings in 90s grunge and punk from Alice in Chains and The Clash. It's a mix that keeps our sound fresh and unpredictable.

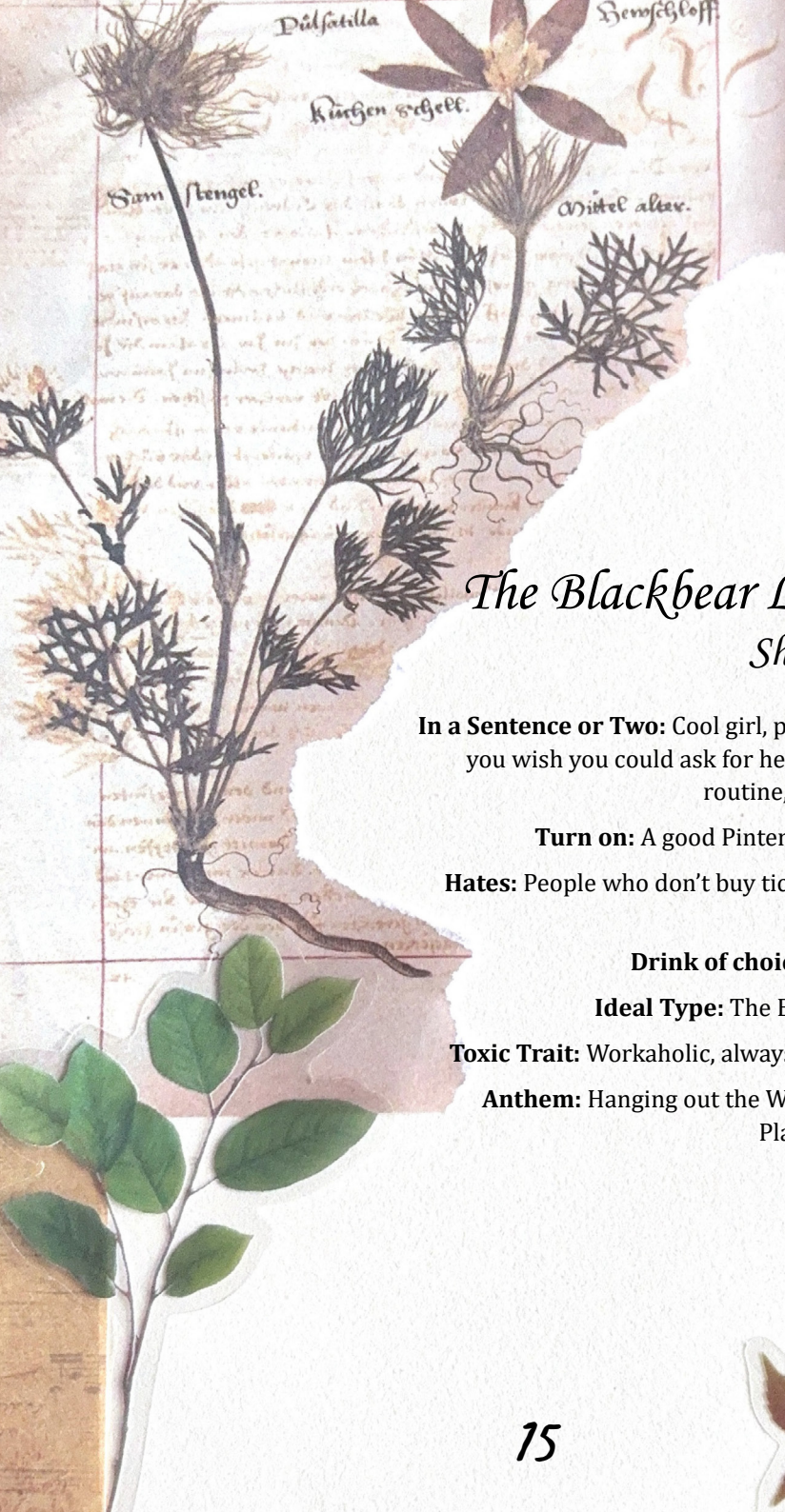
What has been your most memorable performance?

Our Soapbox debut was huge, but the Greaser gig stands out too—tight venue, packed crowd, unreal energy.

What's next for you?

We're recording two EPs over the next year—some of our best work yet. Big things coming.

14



The Blackbear Lodge *She/they*

In a Sentence or Two: Cool girl, plaid skirt,
you wish you could ask for her eyeliner
routine, a Gemini

Turn on: A good Pinterest board

Hates: People who don't buy tickets until
the door

Drink of choice: A G&T

Ideal Type: The Brightside

Toxic Trait: Workaholic, always go go go

Anthem: Hanging out the Window by
Platonic Sex

LOCAL

New Friends - Later Daze

Your New Girl - FELONY

Hanging out the Window - Platonic Sex

would it kill you - JUNO

Lucid Lucy - Mr Finn

heartstrings - strayfold

Whatever You Like - Asha Jefferies

Moths - Pipin

Rocket Shoes - Hazel Mei

Dance Now - Girl and Girl

Kinda Fucked - Serendipiti

Deadbeat Boyfriend - Love Street

Bookworm - Georgia Scarlett

The Line - Lottie McLeod

Stuck in the Middle - Cosmic Vice

Dumb Decision - Tahnee Rose

Cali - Clea

Strictly Business - The Graveyard Club

slow down - deni

Waves - Wasted

of mind - Ollie Schwerin

My New Getaway - Samichoux

Priority List - Shamia Lily

Falling - The Dandys

Homeland - Tjaka

Roadie - Full Flower Moon Band

Long Hot Summer - Tessa Fleur

Bury Me - Neish

No More - The Phosphenes

pareidolia - lui, Kakugan]

Never Hurt Me - The Lost Heads Club

MUSIC



Our Third Place

Author: Annabelle Barnes

What does it mean to belong to a scene right now? Why does it feel so rare, yet so vital?

A borrowed amp. A cheap gig. A room full of people pulled together by something they didn't know they needed. It's the back room of a bar; a living room full of fold-up chairs; a makeshift venue where fairy lights really do the heavy lifting. It's a feeling that is hard to name, and these spaces rarely last, but while we're in them, they feel like home.

Sociologist Ray Oldenburg coined the term third place to describe the informal gathering spaces that exist outside of the home (the first place) and work (the second place). These are parks, cafés, pubs, and community halls that encourage lingering and conversation. Oldenburg argued that third places serve an essential function in communities: levelling hierarchies, fostering spontaneous social contact, and building intra-community trust and empathy—qualities that strengthen the social fabric of communities and spur civic engagement. For individuals, these spaces offer something more: a sense of belonging, exposure to new perspectives, a reprieve from isolation, and a necessary mental decompression in an increasingly atomised, productivity-obsessed culture. To qualify as a true third place, according to Oldenburg, certain criteria need to be met: the space should be neutral ground, have low social and economic barriers for entry, be conversation-driven, and largely non-hierarchical. By those standards, the Brisbane grassroots music scene doesn't always tick the boxes. Even modest ticket and venue-hiring prices create a financial barrier. Scenes can be exclusive, even insular. Not every project survives, and not every venue can afford to stay open. By Oldenburg's criteria, these spaces sort of... fail.

And yet, here I am, in Brisbane's Junk Bar, shoulder-to-shoulder with strangers and regulars, sharing in the magic of a set that will never be played the same way again. Retrieving the amp I lent the guitarist; thanking them for the free session work they did for me last month. It is on these nights that I feel I have come the closest I ever will to experiencing a true third place in the world we live in now.

I've been thinking a lot about The Friendship Problem, a Substack essay by Rosie Spinks, which names how capitalism isolates us, then sells community back to us in monetised fragments. She mourns the decline of generalised reciprocity—the idea of helping each other freely, with no expectation of immediate return. Capitalism hates friction, she writes. It doesn't want us giving each other lifts, or sharing meals, or lending tools. It wants us to outsource those things for money. But in our scene, that spirit is still alive. We pass around gear, lend time, share ideas and spaces—because most of us are running our projects

at a financial loss already. Videographers cut rates. Sound engineers stay late. Friends shoot launch shows for free. Because we know a win for one of us lifts the whole community.

I want to say these are the kind of spaces that capitalism can't quite touch—but of course, it can. If the last few years have taught me anything, it's that these spaces are inherently fragile. Gentrification, rising costs of living, lack of funding, and the sheer expense of running venues have all placed immense pressure on them. There's a quiet grief in watching our beloved small venues disappear.

History remembers the Chelsea Hotel in New York as a crucible for the arts in the 1960s—a place Patti Smith, Leonard Cohen, Andy Warhol, and Bob Dylan all passed through. A socialist utopian commune, it was designed as an affordable artist's cooperative and remained relatively inexpensive for decades. That affordability made it accessible and what emerged was a creative “scenius,” as Brian Eno would put it—a collective intelligence, a community of mutual creative influence and support. Unfortunately Stanley Bard accepting art in lieu of rent was not going to cut it forever, and ultimately, the Chelsea could not withstand the pressures of capitalism. Its legacy is also complicated and, at times, dark. But its history reminds us that spaces like these were intentionally never designed to thrive under capitalism.

Brisbane's small grassroots venues aren't so different. They aren't built to be profitable; they're built to foster connection, creativity, and community. If they were financially sustainable in a capitalist sense, they simply wouldn't be what they are. We know there's a crisis, we know our venues are disappearing, and I strongly believe that we need to fight for them. But part of what makes these spaces beautiful is their refusal to prioritise profit over the upcoming artist. That makes their survival difficult—but it also makes their existence a meaningful resistance. After all, venues like these are the only reason rising artists like us have a shot in the dark at ever playing a show. When another venue closes, there's a grief that follows. Yet, every time, we are reminded that these spaces, and the communities they nurture, have always found ways to adapt. Maybe our third places aren't fixed locations anymore, but rather wherever we choose to carry them.

So here I am, fighting every urge in my body to say that: Maybe the real third places are the friends we made along the way. Please believe me when I tell you that I died a little typing that. But... I kind of believe it. Because I truly believe that our third places aren't buildings, but the repeated and deliberate act of showing up for each other. It's playing the set, running the door, loaning the gear, staying up late to help edit the video. In that sense, I don't think our scene has ever been more alive.

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THE BRIGHTSIDE THEY/THEM



In a Sentence or Two: Baggy jeans and a local band tee, the indie kid (but actually), wants everyone to have a good time

Turn on: Sharing a smoke

Hates: Injustice (people who push to the front of the mosh)

Drink of choice: An IPA

Ideal Type: Blackbear Lodge

Toxic Trait: They like to get a lil' messy sometimes

Anthem: 'Cool Girl' by Worm Girlz

19

Author: Hamish Vanvelthuizen

INTERVIEW WITH LUI

How would you describe your music to someone who has never heard it before?
I'd call it extreme glitch-pop experimentalism—hyper-pop that fuses my full emotional range with a love for pop structure.

Growing up, was there a specific moment or artist that made you realize you wanted to pursue music seriously?
Gorillaz. Their world-building and storytelling made me realize I wanted to create an immersive musical universe of my own.

How has your hometown or upbringing influenced your songwriting and creative process?
My parents exposed me to global music early on, and with my classical background, I developed a strong ear for structure and harmony. That instinct for what sounds "good" is the foundation of how I write today.

Do you find inspiration in specific themes or experiences when writing music?
Absolutely. I'm inspired by the duality between digital life and nature—online communities, identity, and also our connection to Earth. Combining those ideas helps me create music that feels true to me.

What's the most personal song you've written, and what's the story behind it?
That would be metamorphose. It's like a mirror reflecting both joy and anger, love and self-doubt. It represents the complexity of being human—something I always try to capture.

If you could collaborate with any artist (past or present), who would it be and why?
Underscores and SOPHIE. They've shaped hyper-pop in incredible ways, and working with them would be a dream.

What's next for you—any upcoming projects, releases, or goals you're excited about?
My new single metamorphose just dropped, and my EP forevergreen comes out June 6. I'll also be playing more shows around Brisbane—can't wait to share it all.

If you could play any festival or venue in the world, where would it be and why?
Riverstage in Brisbane is the dream. I'd love to tour globally, but that home crowd experience would mean everything.

Photo:
Sofia Cirino



20

Get to know Vermillion's own multi-talented Harriet Wensley (aka artist Hati, and Elsewhere band member)! We chat about everything from songwriting and sonic soup to the joys of balancing the music industry's many branches.

What inspired you to start making music? Was there a specific moment?

I wouldn't say it was a specific moment – growing up my dad was (and still very much is) a huge lover of music. I have very fond memories of his gigantic CD set up in my childhood home, always playing bangers like The Cure, Stone Roses, The Smiths. He took me to my first live music gig and is with me at most live music I see these days. He helped me pick out my first guitar and has been to pretty much every gig I've ever played – so I really have to thank my dad for not just my passion for music but my musical influences too.

If you could describe your sound as a soup made from 3 artists, who would they be?

My music tends to be a different

soup combination in every period of writing, it's always changing! Right now though, I would say I'm listening to and taking lots of inspo from Willow's new drop. I'd also definitely say Georgia Smith. And a new artist I've been influenced a lot by recently - Lola Young. Her melodies and lyrics are awesome.

Do you have an overall goal for following music? What is your 'why'?

My family and friends are good at bringing my awareness to the many goals I have at the moment, and say that I've really got to try and take things one step at a time. I'm not particularly good at that though. I'm dabbling as multiple artists, as a gig booker, event planner... I'm trying to get better at production - all whilst trying to figure out how the heck I'm not going to get stuck working at Yochi for the rest of my life. My mum often says that "if you do a job you love, you will never have to work a day in your life." I don't think that's completely true as I have to work pretty f*ckin hard every day. But when the work's creative, it almost all of the time makes me energised, and I'm very grateful to have the opportunities and support to pursue creativity as a career at all.

I honestly really don't mind where I end up in the music scene. In fact, I think I will always have many eggs in many baskets and that's the way I like it. I think I have a fear of being stuck doing one thing forever, so I'm always looking for new ideas and reinvention of any kind. I believe that as long as I'm passionate and excited about whatever it is I'm doing, I'm heading in the right direction.

What's your songwriting process?

Gosh, it's a bit all over the place. My music is my main form of expression - it's how I untangle my thoughts and give my emotions some sort of physical form. I often find I write about emotions, thoughts and problems that I didn't even know I had – kind of like journaling. My songwriting helps me find perspective in life, so I kind of just let it happen when it happens. If I sit down to purposefully write music, I usually just end up getting frustrated or staring at the wall. I find that my most poetic, emotional and loved songs are the ones that I really don't try too hard to write.

How do you balance being in a band and following your own solo project?

I mean Elsewhere initially began as a way to support my solo music. However, I'm so thankful that it has developed into the project it is now, with the musicians that are involved. I would say a lot of my focus is on the band and that I've neglected my more personal and intimate song writing. I feel as though this year I will be forced to reconnect with my solo music, and give it some attention which I am really looking forward to, and let my solo stuff be fun and passionate.

What are you most excited about being involved with Vermilion?

Vermilion is just such an incredible opportunity. I am so grateful to be a part of the project for both a band and solo act. I'm mostly just excited to learn cool stuff from people I wouldn't have otherwise worked with and be part of my first supported artist experience, as everything I've done up until this point has been solo. So, I'm definitely looking forward to the extra support and creative ideas.

Is there anything in particular we should look out for on the Hati horizon?

Definitely look out for a cheeky single or few this year. My first releases, so pretty exciting and scary at the same time.

Where can we find out more about you!

You can find me on Instagram @hati.music_ and on the Vermilion socials this year as well.

If you could capture the sound of your music into a candle, what would it smell like?

I would say a very specific Terry's chocolate orange scent!



IS GENRE GONE? [CHANGING AND SUBVERTING THE BOXES]

Author: Brianna King

It's February 2nd, 2025. The internet is falling apart. It seems the end is impending. No—Beyoncé just won Country Album of the Year at the Grammys. A legend in the field of contemporary R&B, pop, dance – where did this come from? Have we seen this before? Taylor Swift's humble roots are buried in the country genre before she became a popstar juggernaut. She has defined herself in the genre and created some of the most recognisable songs of the 2020s. Beyoncé shares the same epic feats, and yet her shift in sound was denied and ridiculed. It begs the question: are singers defined by genre?

The freedom of artists is a debatable subject. To change, to adapt. To be born as pop stars turned country legends; or metal bashers turned acoustic softies. Change is seldom welcomed by an audience, yet it happens. Artists continue to take the risks. Maggie Lindemann introduced herself with a girly pop image – titling her first single in 2017 “Pretty Girl” – before she pivoted and released *Paranoia* in 2021, a pop-rock, alternative work. Another indie artist that made a switch in sound is Dreamer Isioma. With contemporary breakout hits like “Valentina” and “Sensitive,” you might be surprised to find an electronic, grunge-like sound in their newest album. They’ve taken a bedroom aesthetic and transformed into an artistic, experimentalist version of themselves. These artists are a small example of those who have taken the leap to redefine themselves. They’ve not only changed their genres, but the audience’s expectations of them. With Beyoncé’s recent win, even amidst the controversy, change has become a prospect more believable.

Do audiences want this, though? Should it become part of an audience’s expectations to anticipate change to what once defined genre? Recently, artists have begun to emerge in the spotlight that already blur these lines. Sleep Token has become a prominent face in the rock scene with their rise to stardom with their breakout single “The Summoning” from their *Take Me Back to Eden* album, released 2023. It’s a typical song of the rock genre with its heavy, amplified guitar and drumming, until the last minute and a half, where it settles into a calm, funk sound. It staggered listeners’ expectations, and became popular thanks to the experimental take, and continues to perform as their best song to date.

In a different category, Yves Tumor combines alternative and electronic influences with pop and dance sounds. It sounds like it shouldn’t make sense, and yet it does. Tumor’s style is distinct, surprising – an exciting and refreshing approach to music that puts him in an individual spotlight.

Between these emerging artists, and these bigger names making waves of change, you could say genre is losing its definition. It’s doubtful that any hardcore metal fans are listening to Sleep Token and comparing them to their favourites; just as no electronic enthusiasts would likely be considering Yves Tumor when they first list greats of the dance genre. Will listeners allow this to continue? Beyoncé is a glaring example of audience rigidity. She samples a different sound than anticipated, is awarded for it, and people deny her use of the genre. Is it simply impossible to please? The definition of the music and the expectations of its sound is lost in the argument of whether it was appropriately allocated or not. Arguably, Beyoncé could have used cowbells and banjos, and still would have been ridiculed for “pop-ifying” the genre. Is she doomed to be stuck in a box?

Or can genre be changed, subverted?

HEADS WILL ROLL FOR THE LOST HEADS CLUB

Author: Brianna King

Never Hurt Me is a recent release from The Lost Heads Club. Who is TLHC? James Davidson – a Brisbane artist with a unique sound. Unfiltered and driven by emotion, TLHC is making his mark on the grunge scene.

Never Hurt me is raw and gritty. The lyrics, sound and emotions are undoubtedly pulled from the depths of aching. The song is full of desperation and yearning, practically slamming it into the listeners ears. James' voice is a serrated knife – rough edged yet cutting clean through the music. His emotion bleeds through the sound. Pure need, pure desire becomes clear.

This song is begging – begging for attention, begging for release. The composition gives the impression that it's trying to slow time, to avoid facing a painful but inevitable end ahead. As it fades into a softer sound with deep, lower notes and withdrawn instrumentals – the sense of despair becomes greater. Never Hurt Me is a song that, ironically, hurts. It's blurry and hazy and you can hear the desperate hope just as much as you can feel the comforting embrace of acceptance that everything isn't perfect. It's for those that hold onto promises – wishing that things will be better, enduring pain, waiting for clearer days. This single marks a distinct path for TLHC, and we're here for the journey.

I hope you're not still hurting.
Know I've been doing the worst.
Feels like I live in a ~~mess~~ house.

With all the thoughts that I transverse
Wonder if I'm blessed to curse all the
friendships I had all the time I spent
Living the same not changing SHIT.

Wonder if you ever fell for me
or did you fuck me just to keep me on my knees?

I guess this is a letter
a faithful reflection
my suicidal intentions.

I didn't wanna leave you in the dark
thought I'd write a song
to help you carry on.

Been needing help, cause I haven't felt myself
for a long time.
And I know that I pretend I'm alright

But you should know not to trust me.
I mean it's the whole reason you dropped me.
You left me on my own.

So I wonder if you ever fell for me
Cause it, feels like it was part of destiny,

So don't tell me you're doing so well on your own.
This is all part of something that I couldn't show.
I was scared to let go, hoping you wouldn't know.
How hard I'd fallen for that girl on the road.

I remember that night.
We were stood outside
Beneath the music and lights.
Drunk beyond our minds.

You finally opened up
Then the feelings came to us
I realised you were what I'd want
Made a promise not to fuck it up.

"But I'll let signs burning bright
But I'll let you still want to
Reconnect somehow with you."

So I wonder if you ever fell for me.
Or am I just some sort of disease.

So please tell me you're doing so well on your own
I'd give anything to have you call.
One last time one last night
is all it would take
To feel some closure before I'm stuck in the grave.

— TLHC ♡



It's Still a Secret

Turn on: A green leather couch

In a Sentence: Your favourite queer aunt; personality reflected in her maximalist, eclectic home

Hates: Deadlines

Anthem:
Analogue
by Folk Bitch Trio

Drink of choice:
A good red

Toxic Trait: Best friends (and still in love) with her ex, 'Can you keep a secret'

Interview with Shamia Lily

Author Hamish Vanvelthuisen

What first got you into music, and how did your journey as an artist begin?

I was four, watching Taylor Swift's "Love Story" video, and turned to my mum saying, "I'm going to be a singer like her." That moment sparked something in me that never faded. Over time, my dream grew, but the heart of it remained: to be on stage, singing my words, and creating emotional connections through music—whether it's making someone smile, feel understood, or just enjoy the moment.

Who are your biggest musical influences, and how have they shaped your sound?

Taylor Swift is the foundation of my musical world. I've seen her live every time she's been in Brisbane, and the level of artistry, storytelling, and spectacle in her shows is something I've always aspired to. Her lyrics feel like poetry—deeply personal yet universal. I also love musical theatre, which feeds my love for dramatic, immersive performances. More recently, I've been inspired by Gracie Abrams' raw, honest songwriting and emotional intimacy.

Growing up, was there a specific moment or artist that made you realize you wanted to pursue music seriously?

It's always been in me, but the realisation hit when people began reaching out after hearing my songs, saying they felt seen or supported. That mirrored how my favourite artists made me feel, and it was such a full-circle moment. It reminded me of that little girl with the big dream—and I want to make her proud.

How do you balance staying true to your artistic vision while also considering what listeners might connect with?

The best way to connect is by being honest. If I'm writing about real emotions and experiences, people will find something to relate to. I've stopped trying to write what I think people want and just focus on being authentic.

What's next for you—any upcoming projects, releases, or goals you're excited about?

I'm releasing my EP *Seasons of a Teenage Girl*, which explores the emotional cycle of love through seasonal themes. I'm also working with Vermilion, which has been full of exciting opportunities—gigs, collaborations, and growth. This year feels like a big turning point.



FOR THE LOVERS...

Author: Brianna King

A stellar emergence from the debut EP of Tawa drive. For those who feel everything in the most delicate of ways.

The world of acoustic haze has been gifted another outstanding artist. Tawa Drive, the solo project of Evan Scrimgeour, brought us his new EP, PROCEED, just last year (2024). The collection is full of depth. Warmth bleeds through the entirety of the album, embracing the listener in a gentle hold as he sings them through stories of love, loneliness, life. The music itself is subtle, and yet the depths of the songs serve a heavy impact as Evan bears his heart on his sleeve.

There's a taste of everything in this EP. Evan utilises a range of instruments and layered vocals to create a perfect ambience for each song. His guitar and drum work are particular highlights; perfectly complimenting the smooth tone of Evan's vocals which blend in such a dreamy way. There's experimental work with occasional electronic features, adding a more up-beat sound to some of the songs (Echoes in particular).

Evan perfects the balance between mellow and energetic. As if taking the listener through the waves of life itself, he nurtures an entire world in this EP. It becomes abundantly clear that Evan has a passion not just for singing and songwriting, but for crafting music. By the first interlude – Nothing Will Ever Feel Quite Like That Again - he flexes his instrumental skills and expert artistic vision. No words need to be said in this interlude. With gentle layering and careful playing, Evan creates a depth and atmosphere that speaks beyond what lyrics could. Despite the almost simple nature of his acoustic approach, every song is extremely polished. They're light, easy to take in – the kinds of songs you'd listen to as you lay on your bedroom floor, or in the grass, watching clouds pass overhead. Evan's tone is light and soothing, softening the weight of longing and heartfelt lyricism.

PROCEED is an exceptional work. Down to the smart titling of each song, it's without a doubt that this album was designed to be experienced. To be heard and felt; to be understood and accepted. It only gets better with each listen, as you dive deeper into the thought Evan has put into every single beat, lyric, or transition. It is a beautiful album, and a definite recommendation for those that love acoustic, dreamy music. Fans of Cigarettes After Sex, Finneas or SYML are sure to find this album a treat. Tawa Drive's PROCEED is for those who love with their hearts on their sleeves.



Photo: Sofia Cirino

How Digital Platforms Have Reshaped Music Consumption

Author: Reanna Eke

Music. For generations, we've composed, shared, and consumed it in myriad ways. In the not-so-distant past, discovering new music was a laborious task, and, in my own experience, generally consisted of waiting for Triple J or Rage to play an unknown track, flipping through CDs at a Sanity, or parroting whatever songs my parents would hum—and even with the dawn of YouTube, finding your niche required a certain amount of time, algorithm luck, and networking. These days, the landscape is radically different, and I frequently find myself reflecting on my relationship with music before these household streaming services like Spotify and Apple Music. Millions of songs are available at just the flex of your fingertips, curated by algorithms catering to individual tastes. This advancement in music streaming has fundamentally transformed how we listen to, access, and value music. Undeniably, they've democratised music discovery and made listening more accessible than ever, but have also altered our emotional connection to music, the value we place in it, artist-listener relationships, and reshaped the economics of the music industry.

My palate for music (and for most things) was catalysed by nostalgia, so I have an unapologetic fondness for forms of music listening from times passed—and, recently, I've noticed myself trying to replicate dated processes in my search for new music. This generally entails me listening to entire albums in the order they were intended, rather than in playlists, then researching the artists and watching live performances, finding their inspirations, buying the vinyl, and then repeating the process. I feel, for me, this is a more fulfilling approach that deepens my resonance with the music and understanding of the artists. But the thing is, before this, I would find myself almost 'speed-dating' genres and artists much more frequently. And while that freedom shed my musical tunnel vision for the better, it also made music more disposable—something to fill silence rather than something to sit with and reflect on. I would very rarely listen to an album all the way through; instead, I became fully dependent on the whims of an algorithm...

But, on the plus side, streaming services have made music more accessible to all demographics than ever before. I grew up in rural Australia. One of the major disadvantages of music consumption was the inconsistent availability of physical copies at stockists and the very few platforms to discover new, underground, or local music.

And so, with the rise of advanced digital streaming features like Spotify's "Discover Weekly" and curated genre playlists, those geographical disadvantages dissolved altogether. This easier access helps niche and independent artists find new audiences with a larger reach, in many cases promoting global recognition as well—something that was much harder in the era of CDs (and even iTunes). For many and most listeners, the ease of access is unparalleled—we can venture entire discographies, share songs instantly with friends and acquaintances (gone are the days of lending CDs and waiting days to months to have them returned), and take our music libraries wherever we go, without the bulk of a CD holder.

Unfortunately, the other side of the coin is that our musicians and artists are the ones to pay the price for our listening convenience. For readers who are unaware, like I was until recently, the truth is the financial model of streaming pays artists mere fractions of a cent per play, making it near impossible for all but popular and mainstream musicians to earn a living from their work. According to various industry reports (many accounts from musicians I know personally), artists will earn roughly \$0.003–\$0.005 per stream on Spotify, which means a song would require hundreds of thousands of plays to generate even a modest revenue. This is not at all sustainable for our artists, who already have to pay much more to upload their music to the platform. This change has forced many to rely on live performances, merchandise (generally exxy to produce), and crowdfunding to survive. We've already begun to see how it has promoted an industry where artists race to produce quantities of trending content over creative experimentation or long-form storytelling.

Ultimately, streaming services have revolutionised music consumption in ways that are both exciting and concerning. They've empowered listeners and expanded access, but also contributed to the commodification of music and strained the livelihoods of many artists. So, is there a middle ground, you ask? I believe there absolutely is. There are ways we can embrace the advancements in music streaming and still honour more traditional listening and support our artists; find ways to be more intentional with how you consume music, balance the ease of discovery with the depth of appreciation. Talk about the music, buy the merch, collect the records, attend the live shows! Digital streaming will only evolve; it is important for both listeners and creators to think critically about the trade-offs and to push for a system that values music not just as content, but as an art form.



TOMCAT NE / NIM

In a Sentence or Two: you wouldn't bring him home to your mum. You wouldn't even tell your house mate about him. But the chemistry is on fire.

Turn on: testing the boundaries

Hates: Firebombers

Drink of choice: Fireball Apple

Ideal Type: anyone down to be a third with Greaser

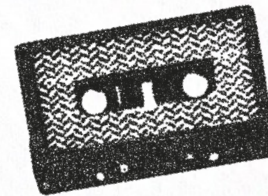
Toxic Trait: recently started smoking

Anthem: It's Girl on Fire by Alicia Keys but he'd tell you it's Duality by Slipnot



Thank you for taking the time to read this issue of Vermilion Magazine.

Thank you to all invloved in the creation of this Magazine.



THE PHOSPHENES
ARE HOT!!



SLIT THE Y
LATERDAZE
ROCK!
JC was here...