

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Stephanie Escobar: "Overlooked and Underrated"

Stephanie Escobar · Wednesday, January 13th, 2016

Stephanie Escobar is a 16-year-old student currently furthering her education at St. Bernard High School. She is the second oldest child of four and was born and raised in Los Angeles. She is an aspiring actress who enjoys the comforts of poetry and writing short stories. Stephanie is greatly influenced by Indie music and authors such as Edgar Allen Poe. She lives a humble life and works every day to hopefully one day make a living through the entertainment world.

She is this week's feature on "[Tomorrow's Voices Today](#)," the new series curated by poet and educator Mike Sonksen.

Overlooked and Underrated

Music is one of the many wonders in life—it can evoke multiple emotions and has an unlimited amount of creative freedom in its making. Music can vary from rap to grunge to ballads to classic hardcore rock. Nonetheless, it goes without saying that one of my favorite genres of music is indie rock.

Indie rock is one of the genres that is underrated because many indie rock artists are not widely known as compared to pop singers like Justin Bieber or Taylor Swift. However, some of the deepest and most intellectual lyrics have been composed by indie rock artists, including James Bay, Hozier, Arctic Monkeys and The 1975. Indie rock is my preferred genre of music because it portrays the darkness behind all the beautiful gifts life has to offer.

James Bay, a twenty-five-year-old British indie rock singer, songwriter, and guitarist, has taken the indie rock world by storm. Rising to fame with his album *Chaos and Calm*, he was able to reach number 1 in the UK and number 15 in the US. James Bay is not only a great musician, but a genius when it comes to songwriting. In the second verse of one of his number one songs, called "Let It Go," James writes: "From throwing clothes across the floor/to teeth and clothes and slamming doors at you/If this is all we're living for/why are we doing it, doing it, doing it anymore?" This song revolves around a relationship gone wrong. Meaning a beautiful relationship two people once shared that suddenly took a turn and became a corrupt and dangerous relationship. This James Bay lyric is suggesting that they are trying to hold onto a love that they don't need. It is time to let go of each other and their relationship in order to be what they really are. He is asking why are they still trying to fight if their love is long gone and all they do is fight, "slamming doors at you." He is saying that they can try to keep loving each other, but it will not happen because deep down they know their love and relationship is gone. Thus, they should just "Let It Go." In another stanza James writes: "I used to recognize myself/It's funny how reflections change/when we're becoming

something else/I think it's time to walk away." Emphasizing that the relationship has done nothing but change the two. They have lost themselves so far into the relationship that even their own reflections are not recognizable. The relationship has become toxic, causing them to change as a person.

Another influential indie rock artist that has earned his way into the industry through his thoughtful and insightful lyrics is Hozier. Hozier is an Irish singer and songwriter from Bray, County Wicklow. In his song "Eden," Hozier writes about a marriage and an affair that is taking place at the same time. In the song, the lover is referred to as 'Babe' whereas the wife is denoted as 'Honey.' In the first verse, he writes; "Babe, there's something wretched about this/Something so precious about this/Oh what a sin." The man from Eden is clearly a reference to the serpent in the Garden of Eden. He is there to tempt this woman, the object of his desire, into sin by having an affair with him. However, there is something wrong about sinning with him that makes it more exciting and thrilling. This is referencing the weakness of man, how in the book of Genesis the serpent was able to tempt Eve into eating from the forbidden tree. This song and lyric emphasizes the dark beauty of sinning. In the chorus; "Honey, you're familiar like my mirror years ago/Idealism sits in prison, /chivalry fell on its sword/Innocence died screaming, honey, ask me I should know/I slithered here from Eden just to sit outside your door." Unlike his lover, Babe, Honey is familiar, boring, and these are the reasons as to why the marriage is failing. When he is with Honey, he has to slither back home from Eden, where he has sinned with Babe. When he is home with his wife Honey, he is still mentally far away with Babe in Eden.

In their song "Why'd You Only Call Me When You're High," indie rock band Arctic Monkeys talk about a relationship with a bad dynamic as could be understood from the chorus of the song: "Now it's three in the morning/and I'm trying to change your mind/Left you multiple missed calls and to my message you reply/Why'd you only call me when you're high? High. Why'd you only call me when you're high?" The song indicates a terrible on-again and off-again relationship between two individuals. They have a history together and have gone through breakups multiple times. Referring back to the chorus, the man in the relationship claims to be in love with this girl; however, for whatever reason, he only contacts her when he's under the influence of drugs. The last two lines that read "Why'd you only call me when your high," are being narrated by the on and off-again girlfriend from the relationship. It feels as if the woman is only being used as a comfort or for sexual means, which would drive the bigger question: why is it that people only call you when they are under the influence or things seem convenient to them?

The 1975 is yet another indie rock band that has truly captured the essence of what indie rock music is all about. The 1975 is a British rock band that was formed in Manchester and consists of four members: Matthew Healy, Adam Hann, George Daniel, and Ross MacDonald. In their song called "Robbers," they wrote: "She had a face straight out a magazine/God only knows but you'll never leave her/I'll give you one more time/We'll give you one more fight/Said one more line/Will I know?" This song could be considered a love song. However, it is a love song about another toxic relationship. Throughout the song, the band is talking about how intoxicated their relationship actually is. They are too focused on each other to notice the destruction they cause each other. The title "Robbers" is referring to how the lovers are robbing each other of their own happiness and the opportunities the world has to offer. They can't move on and grow in life and love because they are so caught up in their intoxicating relationship.

When it comes to having favorite songs and artists, it is very difficult for me to choose because in order for me to have one, the way they convey their music really has to speak to me. However, when it comes to indie rock artists, I cannot pick my favorites because there are so many. Lyrically, indie rock is dark, and that is the main characteristic that attracts me to this genre of music. Indie rock artists reveal the true darkness behind all the things that are meant to bring us

joy, such as love and relationships. Nothing in this world is perfect and indie rock understands and exposes that.

(Featured image of Matthew Healy of The 1975 used with permission from their Wikipedia page.)

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