

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Wiped Out! of Reality

Jaelyn Burks · Thursday, October 20th, 2016

(*"Tomorrow's Voices Today"* is a new series curated by poet and educator Mike Sonksen.)

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The feeling of the music goes beyond your ears to your mind, but instead reaching any form of sensory in your body. The Neighbourhood's latest album, *Wiped Out!*, stands as the teenage 'despondency' anthem. The alternative rock band formed in Newbury Park, California, released their album, *Wiped Out!*, in October of 2015. The album revolves around the journey of coming of age and the positive and negative life experiences that accommodate that road of discovery. The album represents finding, accepting, and overcoming life, just like some of the qualities of the band that have made me come to truly appreciating their art. Upon first hearing The Neighbourhood's music, which was one of the first interactions I received when it came to the genre of rock, I immediately fell in love with most of their songs. *Wiped Out!* formed an escape from the harsh realities of life at the time, and the complicated feelings and ideas that come along with maturing. But more than just their sounds, I found a spiritual embodiment of my mind through the lead singer of the band, Jesse Rutherford. Rutherford exists as a free spirit: ignoring the boundaries of gender roles/expectations, continuously being fashionably adventurous when it comes to clothing and actions, and not limiting himself to any culture. *Wiped Out!* possesses not only music for me, but a teleportation device into finding my quintessential self.



The Neighbourhood's non-conformist side of the band's attitude shows through the eighth track of the album, "Greetings from Califournia." The song's sound resembles the look of 1980's grunge fashion with rebellious, miscreant tones. The beginning of the song says, "Hands up it's a stick up, nobody's leaving this room for a minute, everyone's breathing these fumes that are in it, sick of the people who make the decisions." The song talks about defying the boundaries created by those in charge of making the rules of the world, and instead rising with your own culture. "Greetings from Califournia" continues with, "Put your hands up it's a stick up, hopefully God is still down to forgive us." The song progresses inferring a change of outlook in the perception of what is acceptable. The song refers to the progressive mindset abundant in the state of California saying, "I know once you come to California, you will never look back." implying that the exposure to new mindsets only furthers a person's being. As stated before, the album, *Wiped Out!*, stands as the epitome of teenage culture, with "Greeting from Califournia" acting as its defiant side.

The next aspect of adolescent culture within *Wiped Out!* is the struggle that comes with mentally maturing and discovering the next aspect of life, which one of the album's singles, "R.I.P. 2 My Youth," embodies. During the song, the lyrics say, "Everybody's talking, but what's anybody

saying? Mama said if I really want to, then I can change,” but continue later on stating, “Mama, there is only so much I can do, Tough for you to witness it but it was for me too.” Throughout adolescence, up until the climax of our teenage years, we are treated as children not capable of using maturity to survive and make effective decisions, with no exposure to anything else. Then , teenagers are immediately entrusted to make a decision for the rest of their lives, as the sudden murder of our youth. The world overly shelters its youth, making this time of self-discovery even more abrupt and dramatic. As the lyrics imply, the ambitious mottos engrained in our brains as our younger selves, die of when the blunt death of our youth occurs. Later in the song, the lyrics read, “I was naive and hopeful and lost, now I’m aware and trapped in my thoughts.” And this idea of being ‘trapped’ flows throughout the song. “R.I.P. 2 My Youth” uses the metaphor of “Throw me in a box with the oxygen off, you gave me the key then you locked every lock,” as if the only thing available to do is accept the ways of life. The song emphasizes discovering the struggle of maturity, and succumbing to the efforts that come along with it.



The Neighborhood

Along with growing into adulthood comes extreme emotional voyage. The fourth song, also named “Wiped Out!,” exists as the mean of the album. “Wiped Out!” takes the listener on a journey through depression with the various beats and supernatural sounds occurring in the song. The song begins with, “Lost and afraid, young and innocent but getting older, I don’t wanna be alone... my current state is heavy, hope it’s a phase or something, don’t let me go,” which shows the isolation and self-denial factor of depression. Later in the song, the lyrics go, “How can you feel the way that I’m feeling, if you’re not inside my head?... Somebody find me and fast, look what I did to myself and my friends, emotions and paying the rent, emotions and paying the rent.” This part of the song relates to the coming of age theme of “R.I.P. 2 My Youth,” in the sense that the adult world focuses on the routine of surviving (alike depression), instead of the ambition of adolescence. The end of the song says, “I’m back and forth, I think I’m going crazy, I’m back and forth, I can’t make up my mind, I’m up and down, I’m never satisfied,” repeating these phrases and fading out, like the feelings and lessons of depression, slowly silencing but not disappearing.

The album, *Wiped Out!*, perfects the emotions of adolescents being introduced to adulthood, covering emotional basis of love, depression, and discovering yourself. The album stands as extremely relatable to the majority of the teen population, since it focuses around being pushed into the unknown of the ‘real’ world. Personally, the album not only helped me overcome a period of confusion and disarray in my life, but also further helped me experience ideas out of reach of my current lifestyle. The album plus the band members, and the message both parties present shows and teaches lessons beyond the reach of some individuals, from personal state to societal setting. Music releases and exposes people to their own and other cultures, and The Neighbourhood does just that. *Wiped Out!* releases reality in the minds of its listeners and sends them into a clear view of the perception of their mind. The songs’ chill and almost ghostly feel represents the clear and reinforcing mindset the music perceives. *Wiped Out!* further orchestrated and broadened the definition of myself that I held in my then current self and future embodiment.

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