

Your monthly
music forecast!

2018 In Review

Agnez Mo

Ava Max

Johnny Orlando

LANCO

and more

 memBrain

THE STORM REPORT

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JANUARY 2019



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Tash Sultana (STORM No. 46) Photo by Clint Peloso

ABOUT THE STORM REPORT

STORM = STRATEGIC TRACKING OF RELEVANT MEDIA

The STORM Report is a compilation of up-and-coming bands and artists who are worth watching. Only those showing the most promising potential for future commercial success make it onto our monthly list.

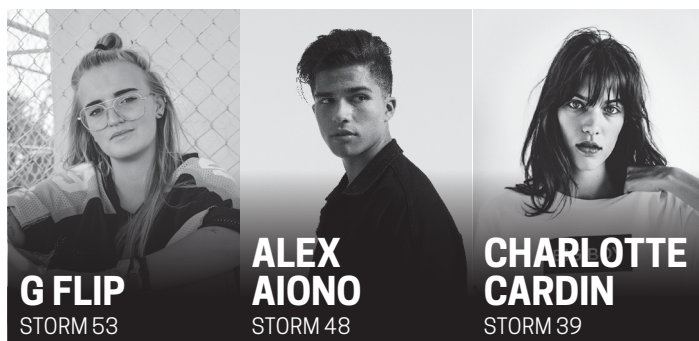
How do we know?

Through correspondence with industry insiders and our own ravenous media consumption, we spend our month gathering names of artists who are “bubbling under”. We then extensively vet this information, analyzing an artist’s print & digital media coverage, social media growth, sales chart statistics, and various other checks and balances to ensure that our list represents the cream of the crop.

Why do we do it?

Music is the best way to sell products because it creates such a powerful emotional connection with an audience. The STORM Report provides our clients with a tool to harness the music that will be the most relevant to audiences in the near future, thereby becoming very useful for the enhancement of products, promotions, and platforms.

STORM ALUMNI



A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It seems that every year ends with everyone hoping that the next will be better, and 2018 was no exception. We’ve experienced significant cultural shifts as tumultuous and groundbreaking as the erratic weather. The political powers of the world seem to be increasingly more dangerous and threatening, and the unrest of their constituents more palpable. It’s easy to become cynical and downtrodden when there is so much division and devastation, and the truth is so hard to discern. Time Magazine named “The Guardians and the War on Truth” the person of the year for 2018 stating that, “the world may not be getting worse, only more confused, but in time that distinction can vanish.” Here’s to those fighting for what is right. Here’s to being kinder. Here’s hoping that 2019 will bring us all health, wealth, and above all, happiness. And more great music to keep our spirits bright.

Best,



Jennifer Sullivan
President, memBrain
Editor-in-Chief, The STORM Report

STORM STAFF

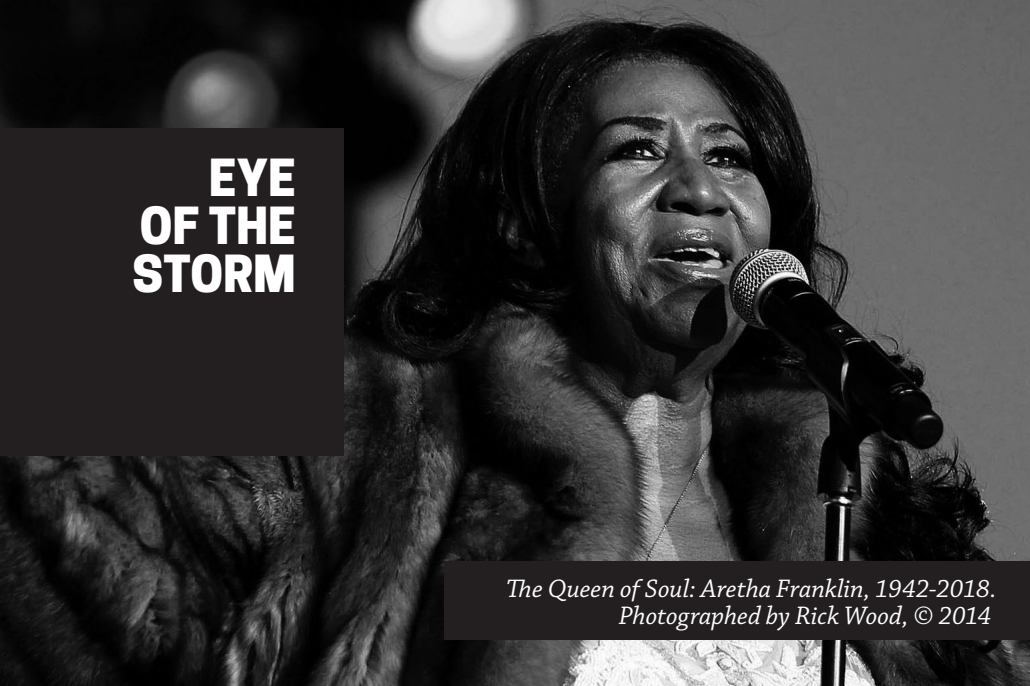
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*The Queen of Soul: Aretha Franklin, 1942-2018.
Photographed by Rick Wood, © 2014*

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year: 2018 In Review

By Grace Slansky

Oh, 2018...the year the Democrats flipped the House, the year of increasingly mind-boggling tweets (allegedly Ambien-fueled and otherwise), the year people took it upon themselves to personally prove that Tide Pods are inedible. As this rotation around the sun is coming to an end, and we are about to embark on another, we have arrived at the perfect time to take a look back at the year we are about to leave behind.

What better way to set the mood for a dive into 2018 than to look first at the songs that made up the soundtrack of the year? Although her debut single was released last year, 2018 is when we really saw the meteoric rise of Cardi B. In April, she dropped her debut album, *Invasion of Privacy*, which in the months following was certified 2x Platinum and rocketed to the top of the Billboard charts. She performed at Coachella, entered into a partnership with fast-fashion company Fashion Nova, and had some very successful collaborations, including the "Finesse" remix with Bruno Mars and the chart-topper "Girls Like You" with Maroon 5. Another star on the rise, British R&B singer Ella Mai (STORM No. 46) has seen quite a bit of success with her top 10 single "Boo'd Up." Although she's clearly making waves and taking names, she maintains an air of humility, stating that she has no idea how "Boo'd Up" got so big and telling interviewers, "Even I'm like 'Wow, I didn't know I could write like this,'" attesting to her grounded personality that resonates so well with fans. Quite a year for female powerhouses, 2018 also brought Kim Petras (STORM No. 52) to our attention. With tracks like "Heart to Break" and "Can't Do Better," she's well on her way to being the next unapologetically pop icon, and she's got a great message about LGBTQ rights to boot! Other musicians have been using their platforms to talk about important issues, including Childish Gambino with his track "This Is America." The song, and the striking video that goes along with it, provides important and poignant commentary on the current state of our country, paying special attention to the obscene amount of gun violence that we are currently living with.

We created a varied and catchy soundtrack for the year with chart-toppers and burgeoning artists, but we can't forget about the movie soundtracks that were curated for us. First *Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again* totally delivered on its promise, and had us jamming out to the songs of ABBA once again. Then came the long-awaited release of *A Star is Born*, starring Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper, who also made his directorial debut with the film. The soundtrack debuted at number 1 on the Billboard 200 Albums chart, a position that clearly demonstrates just how taken the fans were with the film and its music. We were reminded of the genius that was Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody*, a representation that was controversial among fans, but music that is universally enjoyed. To close out the year in movie musicals, we have *Mary Poppins Returns* to look forward to. With an all-star cast including Meryl Streep, Emily Blunt, Dick Van Dyke, and Lin Manuel-Miranda, the film is sure to be full of breakout musical numbers to warm our wintery hearts starting on December 19th.

Although we love the increase in movie musicals, it was the inherently less music-centric genre, superhero films, that really broke the box office. Topping the charts for 2018, we have *Black Panther*. The superhero sensation grossed over \$700M domestically. Close behind, *Avengers: Infinity War* had the highest grossing opening weekend of the year (\$207M). And we can't forget about *Incredibles 2*. Not only is it number three on the chart of 2018 domestic grosses, but with \$608M it is the highest grossing animated movie of all time. These Pixar superheroes certainly got their super sequel!

After watching so much action on the big screen, many people turned to their own smaller screens to be a part of the action themselves. Battle Royale-style games first rose to popularity last year, but in 2018 they flooded the mainstream and pop-culture. Thanks to a development team unafraid to take risks, the 2017 game *Fortnite* had an even bigger year in 2018. *PUBG*, or *PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds*, is also among the most popular games of the year, following the Battle Royale format. In response to the perceived success of this

The STORM rages on for our alumni artists. Here's what they were up to this month!

style of game, Tencent Games released *Ring of Elysium* in February of this year, a similarly-formatted game that is free to play. At the end of October, Rockstar games released the action-adventure *Red Dead Redemption 2* to almost unheard-of success. Within three days of release there were already \$725M worth of copies sold, and the epidemic is so strong it sparked not just one but two *South Park* episodes dedicated to the craze.

Amidst all the entertainment, we lost some of our favorite stars and celebrities. Among the voices that are gone now, but never forgotten, are American icon Aretha Franklin, rapper Mac Miller, Swedish DJ Avicii, and controversial rapper XXXTentacion. We are heart-broken to have lost one of our most imaginative minds, Stan Lee, and the brilliant and baffling intellect of Stephen Hawking. The culinary world is forever changed by the loss of Anthony Bourdain and Los Angeles food critic Jonathan Gold. While they are no longer with us, we have their iconic work to guide us into 2019.

Although many of us have come to fear the news for its negative updates and dim outlook on the state of the world, our headlines this year were not all bad. We saw the awe-inspiring power of teamwork when volunteer divers, in partnership with the British Cave Rescue Council, executed an elaborate plan to rescue a Thai soccer team stuck in a flooded cave. The 12 boys and their coach were brought safely to shore in a feat that had many of us following along, holding our breath in anticipation. We saw the world buzz with Royal Wedding fever as Los Angeles-born actress Meghan Markle married Prince Harry. The festivities did not disappoint, complete with elaborate gowns and even more elaborate hats. And, on a positive note for American politics, the voter turnout for this year's midterm election hit a 50-year high, with more than 47% of eligible voters casting ballots. It's refreshing to see more people taking advantage of their power and voice, a trend we'd love to take with us into the coming years.

The world is constantly changing and adapting to fit the needs of consumers and this year has been no exception. Amazon purchased Whole Foods, opening doors for food distribution options we never dreamed possible. Unfortunately, in a changing world sometimes we have to say goodbye to things that once brought us joy, like Toys R Us. This year, the company filed for bankruptcy and closed its doors, a sign that Cyber Monday may soon eclipse the brick-and-mortar-oriented Black Friday. But, for the times that you just need to go to a real store and sort through the merchandise with your own two hands, transportation is evolving. The birds are everywhere, and not in a Hitchcock sense. Rather, Bird Scooters are taking the world by storm popping up in over 100 cities so far. The electric scooters are plentiful and easy to rent, charging by the minute via an app on your smartphone.

With that, we say goodbye to 2018 and usher in a new year, one that we hope will be full of more innovative music, endlessly entertaining movies, challenging games, and more positive headlines than we've come to expect. And, of course, many more issues of The STORM Report.



ALESSIA CARA
(STORM No. 30)

Alessia Cara released her new album, *The Pains of Growing* last week which she both wrote and mostly self-produced. Alessia Cara told *Vulture* that she was just recording on her laptop and realized that she wanted to release those as is. The singer stated, "I just realized the rawness of them was just the way that it needed to be. That re-recording them or touching it up too much would ruin the natural vibe of the songs, so I kept them".



SASHA SLOAN
(STORM No. 59)

Boston native Sasha Sloan released another song this past week off of her EP *LoSER* and was featured in *Billboard* magazine discussing her story and process. She has written for the likes of Camila Cabello, Kygo, and ODEZA and is set to embark on her first North American headlining tour in March 2019.



CLEAN BANDIT
(STORM No. 19)

Roughly four years later, the trio Clean Bandit has released their second official album. *What is Love?* is a culmination of their hits over the last couple of years, including features like Zara Larsson, Anne-Marie, and Ellie Goulding. The group has also been announced for *Sea Sessions 2019* along with Sigríð (STORM No. 46).

STORM FORECAST

Events and happenings for your radar.

REALITY BITES

With 5G finally making its way into the mainstream, immersive experiences, technologies like AR, VR, and Mixed Reality, will continue blurring the line between the physical world and the digital world. Look for these technologies to change the way we experience content, shop, and even interact with each other in 2019 and beyond.

PLAY THAT FUNKY (FUTURE) MUSIC

Youth engagement figures with political issues are on the rise and this will also be reflected in the charts going into 2019. Increased multiculturalism and social diversity will also continue to give rise to popular music that is more culturally expansive and authentic without any modifications for US audiences (see the K-Pop and Latin music explosions of recent years). And shared experiences will continue to drive artist exposure to audiences. The US live music industry is expected to grow to 11.06 billion by 2019, with the rise of new festivals proving to be extremely lucrative not only for big names, but also to up-and-coming artists. Get your tickets now and start planning for a year of amazing, diverse music in the new year!

LET'S CHAT!

Reports show that chatbots and messenger bots will continue to grow in 2019—as they'll become more “normal” in the eyes of consumers. By 2019, chatbots will be the first place you will go to order a pizza, choose a mobile plan, or even book a hotel room!

(MOBILE) INTERNET KILLED THE TELEVISION STAR

Research shows that the internet will catch up to television in 2019 around the world in terms of hours watched; and 45 minutes of an average person's internet time will be spent watching mobile video largely due to the growth of lower-priced smartphones. In fact, mobile will be responsible for all growth in internet consumption and more than a quarter of all media consumption—that includes time spent watching movies in theaters, listening to the radio and reading physical newspapers and magazines—next year.

LET'S ALL GO TO THE MOVIES 2019

Get your popcorn ready! 2019 is going to be a huge year for Disney, with *Star Wars: Episode IX*, *Avengers: Endgame*, *The Lion King*, *Captain Marvel*, *Toy Story 4*, *Dumbo*, and *Aladdin* topping all of the “Most Anticipated Films of 2019” lists. Other films we are looking forward to in 2019 include highly anticipated sequel like *The Lego Movie 2*, *Space Jam 2*, *John Wick 3* and *Frozen 2*—as well as an untitled *Terminator* reboot, the debut of *Wicked* on the silver screen, and Tom Hanks as Mr. Rogers!

THE 20 ARTISTS ON OUR RADAR

| Rank | Artist | Audio/Video | Label | Target Demo | Score |
|------|----------------|-------------|---|-----------------------------|-------|
| 1 | AGNEZ MO | | Aquarius Musikindo, 300 Entertainment | Young Adults | 41 |
| 2 | AVA MAX | | Atlantic Records | Teens, Young Adults | 40 |
| 3 | JOHNNY ORLANDO | | Universal Music Canada | All Ages | 38 |
| 4 | LANCO | | Arista Nashville | All Ages | 34 |
| 5 | SHY MARTIN | | BLNK Music | All Ages | 31 |
| 6 | MAHALIA | | Black Butter Records, Atlantic Records UK | Young Adults, Adults | 31 |
| 7 | AJ MITCHELL | | Epic Records | All Ages | 30 |
| 8 | 88GLAM | | XO, Republic Records | Adults, Young Adults | 28 |
| 9 | PINK SWEAT\$ | | Human-Re-Sources | Young Adults, Adults | 27 |
| 10 | NITA STRAUSS | | Independent | Young Adults, Adults | 27 |
| 11 | RAVEENA | | Manorama Music, S.Music | Adults | 26 |
| 12 | MOTHICA | | Fool's Gold Records | Young Adults, Adults | 26 |
| 13 | L DEVINE | | Warner Bros. Records | All Ages | 26 |
| 14 | TIERRA WHACK | | Interscope Records | Teens, Young Adults, Adults | 26 |
| 15 | OMAR APOLLO | | Dark Room/Interscope Records | All Ages | 25 |
| 16 | RUNNING TOUCH | | Universal Island Records | Teens, Young Adults | 25 |
| 17 | CARLIE HANSON | | Independent | Teenagers, High Schoolers | 20 |
| 18 | DRAMA | | Independent | Teens, Young Adults, Adults | 18 |
| 19 | ALAYNA | | 20XX | Teens, Young Adults, Adults | 15 |
| 20 | AYELLE | | Majestic Casual | Young Adults, Adults | 14 |

STORM WARNING

Listen to STORM REPORT artists on:



Watch STORM REPORT artists on:



STORM has a new formula!

Artists are now given a score out of 100 that takes several factors of music success into account, including streaming, social media influence, and industry support.

Click on the SoundCloud and YouTube icons next to each artist on the chart for featured audio tracks and video performances.

Also, check out our comprehensive Spotify playlist and YouTube playlist by clicking on the buttons above.

SYMBOL KEY

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Instagram
- SoundCloud
- Spotify
- YouTube
- Genre
- Similar Artists



1 AGNEZ MO

📺 17.4M 📺 5.3M 📺 16.4M

🔊 Hip-Hop, R&B

© Lauryn Hill, Rita Ora

Agnez Mo began her career as a child star in Indonesia. She is an award winning singer/songwriter and actress who has continuously reinvented herself from releasing a trilogy of kids' albums in the mid-90s to stretching herself as an actress and R&B/hip-hop artist in the 2000s as Agnes Monica. As Agnez Mo, she has signed to 300 Entertainment (home of Migos and Fetty Wap) and released her first international album *X* in October 2017.

Photo provided by artist site ©2018

2

AVA MAX

14.1K 9.1K 77.2K
Pop Lady Gaga,
Maty Noyes



A creator of pop anthems with major fiery female empowerment vibes, Ava Max is a unique new talent, gifted with a powerful voice, an individualistic high fashion mindset, and a serious passion for cinematic, theatrical popcraft. Her latest single, "Sweet but Psycho" has over 100 million plays on Spotify. She recently signed to Full Stop Management.

Photo provided by label ©2018

3

JOHNNY ORLANDO

869K 1.4M 5.6M
Pop Justin Bieber,
Shawn Mendes



Famous for posting covers by artists such as Austin Mahone and Justin Bieber on YouTube starting at the age of 8, now 14-year-old Johnny Orlando is garnering even more fans with his own original music. With multiple Teen and Kids Choice Award nominations and a combined social following of 16 million dedicated fans, Jonny Orlando is a pop star on the rise.

Photo by Peter Yang ©2018



**IAN'S
TOP PICK!**

4 LANCO

📺 24.3K 📺 112K 📺 80.8K
🔊 Country © Zac Brown Band, Little Big Town

LANCO, short for Lancaster and Company, is an American country music band consisting of Brandon Lancaster (lead vocals), Chandler Baldwin (bass guitar), Jared Hampton (keyboards), Tripp Howell (drums), and Eric Steedly (guitar). The band is signed to Arista Nashville, a subsidiary of Sony Music. Photo by Jim Wright ©2018

5 SHY MARTIN

📺 N/A 📺 10.4K 📺 23K
🔊 Pop, EDM
© Hailee Steinfeld, Halsey

6 MAHALIA

📺 45K 📺 36K 📺 141K
🔊 R&B, Soul
© Jorja Smith, Kehlani



SHY Martin made her debut in the music industry in 2016 as the featured artist and songwriter behind Mike Perry's 'The Ocean', a track that became one of her first Grammy-nominated, multi-platinum releases. She has over 1.8 billion Spotify streams globally, which include songwriting credits alongside the likes of The Chainsmokers, Kygo & Ellie Goulding, and Bebe Rexha.

Photo by Hampus Hjellström ©2018



Based in Birmingham, England, Mahalia is an alt-R&B/soul singer and songwriter whose influences include Erykah Badu and Lauryn Hill. She began her career as a preteen and drew interest of major record labels by the age of 13.

Photo by Alice Fisher ©2018

"Mahalia is forging her own path and she's powering her way through it with aplomb."
—Independent

7 AJ MITCHELL

388K 148K 1.5M

Pop, R&B

© Shawn Mendes, Charlie Puth

Teenage singer-songwriter AJ Mitchell premiered his signature pop/R&B sound on Instagram, racking up 1.5 million followers after posting covers and original songs that captured his smooth vocal style and gained him fans around the world.

Photo by Dennis Leupold ©2018





8

88GLAM

🐦 N/A 📺 3.8K 📷 75K

🔊 Hip-Hop

© PND, Travis Scott

88GLAM is a new rap duo comprised of Toronto natives Derek Wise and 88 Camino. The duo debuted the name "88Glam" on November 1, 2017, premiering their first music video "12" via Billboard which featured a cameo from The Weeknd.

Photo by Matt Adam and Elie Kimbembe ©2018



9

PINK SWEAT\$


🐦 4.7K 📺 170 📷 34.2K

🔊 R&B

© Khalid, 6LACK

Pink Sweat\$ is a rising singer-songwriter known not only for his incredible vocalism but also his signature pink attire. His first single "Honesty" hit #23 on Spotify's Global Viral Chart and #10 on Spotify's US Viral Chart. After releasing "Honesty" in July 2018, Pink Sweat\$ accumulated over 2 million streams in under 8 weeks. His first EP "Volume 1" dropped in November 2018.

Photo by David Karp & Courtney Loo ©2018



"Having spent her life striving to 'make it' in the world of rock 'n' roll, Nita Strauss has figured out the best way to clear one of the music industry's most awkward hurdles. Be really, really, really good at what you do."

—Leon TK, *Metal Injection*

10 NITA STRAUSS

📺 58.3K 📺 189K 📺 283K

🔊 Heavy Metal, Hard Rock 🎵 Eddie Van Halen, Steve Vai

Nita Strauss is an American guitarist best known for her work with The Iron Maidens, an all-female Iron Maiden tribute band. Her career includes numerous credits including band Femme Fatale and the LA Kiss musical backing group. In June 2014, she replaced Orianthi with Alice Cooper. Earlier this year she launched a Kickstarter to fund her own album stating her intention to remain independent of a label to maintain creative control.

Photo by Larry Dimarzio ©2018



11 RAVEENA

📺 8.6K 📺 15K 📺 56.7K

🔊 R&B 🎵 Brandy, FKA Twigs

Indian-American singer, Raveena seeks to empower women of color through life, especially through her music, highlighting and promoting self-love. At the age of 17, Raveen moved to New York and began her career by working with producer Everett Orr and set off on her first headlining tour in 2018.

Photo by Harshvardhan Shah ©2018

12 MOTHICA

📺 5.5K 📺 9.3K 📺 10.3K

🔊 Pop

🎵 Meg Myers, XYLO

At the start of her career, Mothica collaborated with the likes of Tennyson, Diversa, and BROCKHAMPTON members of Bearface and Kevin Abstract. With a pure voice, emotional lyrics, and a minimalist take on production, Mothica has gained her fanbase purely through her own talent and no background noise.

Photo by Rachel Thalia ©2018



13

L DEVINE

📺 2.2K 📺 9K 📺 34.5K

🔊 Pop

© Taylor Swift, Charli XCX

L Devine's personality driven, moving music displays an unbothered young woman with an innate ability to craft instantly relatable music. Devine released a five-track debut EP called 'Growing Pains' last year and is continuing to release more and more bangers.

**NATALIE'S
TOP PICK!**

Photo by Claire Rothstein ©2018



JENNIFER'S
TOP PICK!

14

TIERRA WHACK

30.7K 5.6K 187K

Rap

Missy Elliott, Chance the Rapper

22-year old Tierra Whack announced her arrival with a stroke of pure audacity—*Whack World*, an absurdist 15-minute album and accompanying music video written to be released on Instagram. First emerging under the name Dizzle Dizz as a 16-year-old back in 2011, she made a name for herself with impressive rapid-fire freestyles in front of acts like ASAP Rocky and Meek Mill.

Photo by Nick Canonica ©2018

"Tierra Whack Is Making Beautifully Strange Rap Music"
— Pigeons & Planes

15 OMAR APOLLO

📺 15.6K 📺 3.8K 📺 42.5K

🔊 Indie © John Mayer, D'Angelo



21-year-old first-generation Mexican-American singer from Indiana, Omar Apollo writes and records his own mix of jazz, R&B, funk, alternative, soul, and pop music. At age 18, Omar began listening to new styles of music and fell in love with the guitar again, since he lost interest at age 12. Some of his biggest influences include Benny Sings, D'Angelo, Los Panchos and John Mayer.

Photo by Aidan Cullen ©2018

16 RUNNING TOUCH

📺 869 📺 20.5K 📺 4.6K

🔊 EDM © Disclosure, ZHU



Mysterious Melbourne native Running Touch offers a unique blend of personal and intimate electronica with dance sensibilities. More than a producer, Running Touch not only curates his own tracks, but acts as a one-man band—playing guitar, drums, piano, launch pad, curating lyrics, singing, and even rapping on his own productions and live show.

Photo by Shevin D ©2018

17 CARLIE HANSON

📺 4.1K 📺 3.3K 📺 19.3K

🔊 Pop © Daya, Billie Eilish



Discovered from her YouTube channel, 18-year-old singer, Carlie Hanson is now performing alongside Troye Sivan and receiving endorsements from the one-and-only Taylor Swift. Her single "Only One" has gained almost 50 million plays on Spotify.

Photo by Jaxon Dobbins ©2018



18

DRAMA

704  4K  11K

 R&B, Dance

© Erykah Badu, Tony Braxton

Chicago-based duo of Na'el Shehade and Via Rosa conjure up an alluring brew of R&B and dance music as DRAMA, whose unique sound has been described as soulful electronic combining influences of house music, indie, neo-soul, pop and R&B

Photo by Lillie Eiger ©2018



19 ALAYNA

731 3K 3K

R&B, Soul

© Summer Walker, Alessia Cara

Smooth and sultry R&B songstress Alayna Powley is a New-Zealand born, now residing in Brooklyn singer-songwriter who has steadily gained attention for her moody, ambient sound. She cites her inspirations as Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, underpinning her passion for writing powerful lyrics.

Photo by Jack McKain ©2017



20 AYELLE

5,152 2,251 4K

R&B, Soul

© Alina Baraz, SZA

The Swedish-Iranian songwriter Ayelle grew up all over Europe but continued to perfect her music while living in London. During this period of life, she was noticed by editorials such as Billboard, Hillydilly and Majestic Casual. She is a PRS (Performing Rights Society) "Women Make Music" grantee, aimed at supporting and breaking down assumptions about women in the industry.

Photo by Melissa Chu ©2018

"Ayelle's seductive, yet confrontational approach provides a unique listening."

—EARMILK

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