

Keep in Touch Better:  
KiT Albums and Music Fandom  
BUNT.  
Royel Otis  
Wyatt Flores  
DARGZ  
...and more!

Your Monthly  
Music Forecast!

 memBrain

# STORM REPORT

ISSUE NO. 90  
MAY/JUNE 2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 4 EYE OF THE STORM

*Keep in Touch Better:  
KiT Albums and Music Fandom*

## 6 STORM TRACKER

*Greta Van Fleet, Kim Petras, BLACKPINK,  
and CHINCHILLA*

## 7 STORM FORECAST

*Tribeca Film Festival, Summer Festival  
Frenzy, Comic-Con is Back! and Major  
Movies*

## 8 STORM WARNING

*Our signature countdown of 20 buzzworthy  
bands and artists on our radar.*

## PLAYLISTS

*Check out this issue's carefully curated  
playlists by clicking below:*



## ON THE COVER

*Emei. Photo by Lindsey Ruth ©2023*

# 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.

### How do we rank?

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.

### 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



# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Over the past several months, we’ve identified a compelling trend emerging—“FuturePast Fusion.” This trend combines nostalgia with cutting-edge digital innovations, seamlessly integrating retro or familiar formats with interactive elements. Muzlive, a visionary company we discovered at CES, exemplifies this fusion with their patented KiT Album format. Captivating the global music industry, Muzlive has sold over 6 million albums worldwide, leveraging the popularity of K-pop and strategic partnerships with influential players like SM Entertainment and YG.

Join us in this month’s edition of the memBrain STORM Report as we delve into the remarkable story of Muzlive and the KiT Album format. Discover how this FuturePast Fusion propels the music industry “back to the future” and captivates fans worldwide. With insightful perspectives from Joe Seok, the visionary Founder and CEO of Muzlive, we explore the profound inspiration and future vision behind this groundbreaking endeavor. Stay tuned for an enthralling journey into the captivating union of nostalgia and innovation, shaping the future of fandom and music distribution.

Enjoy!



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

## STORM STAFF

Jennifer Sullivan  
*Editor-in-Chief*

Grace Slansky  
*Assistant Editor*

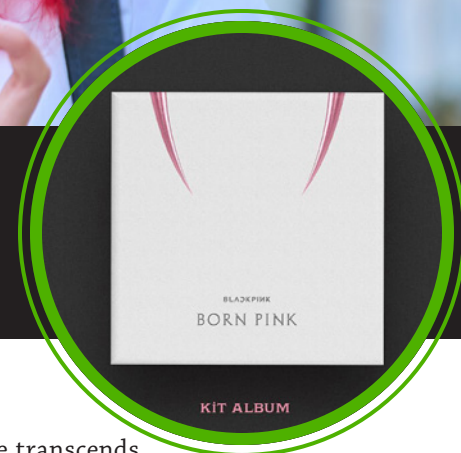
Julia Ross  
Ava Blanchette  
*Research*

Robert Roxby  
*Designer*



## KEEP IN TOUCH BETTER: KiT Albums and Music Fandom

By Grace Slansky and Jennifer Sullivan



Sometimes, serendipity has a way of leading us to the most exciting discoveries. In the vast sea of innovation that is the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES), the memBrain team stumbled upon something extraordinary this year: **Muzlive's KiT platform.**

The STORM Report has documented the rising popularity of K-Pop fandom, both within and outside Korea, for well over a decade now. But until that moment at CES, like many outside the fervent circle of K-Pop fandom, we were unaware of Muzlive or their very popular KiT Albums which have already sold 6M+ copies worldwide.

Beyond its proven success in Korea, Muzlive's KiT Album format presents a compelling amalgamation of two seemingly disparate worlds—the nostalgic charm of CDs and vinyl and the modern ease of digital music. A tangible artifact in an increasingly digital age, this physical product gives music lovers the satisfaction of collection, yet keeps pace with today's tech, being playable on the ubiquitous device of our times: the smartphone.

But the KiT experience transcends beyond access to music tracks. KiT stands for “Keep in Touch,” and these albums unlock a vault of bonus content—images, videos, and physical collectibles like the highly collectible photo cards, keychains, stickers, and more—ramping up the value and broadening the scope of what an ‘album’ can offer. In essence, the KiT Album is a thrilling reinvention of musical consumption.

In an ever-evolving music landscape, where digital collectibles, music merchandise, and celebrity brands have emerged as promising alternative revenue streams, we believe that the KiT Album is a format worth exploring. By tapping into the power of digital collectibles alongside the popularity of music merchandise and celebrity brands, the KiT format opens up new avenues for artists to forge connections, foster communities, and generate sustainable revenue.

Join us as we explore the exciting trajectory of the KiT Album and how it is poised to revolutionize the music industry once again, with an interview with Muzlive CEO and Founder, Joe Seok.

**STORM: How did you come up with the idea for KiT Albums?**

**Joe Seok:** Between 2013 and 2015, digital streaming was not yet the primary source of revenue in the music market. It accounted for only about one-sixth of physical record sales. Like many, however, I recognized the potential growth of streaming due to the convenience it offered on smart devices, which led to a shrinking physical records market. During this time, I became curious about whether music fans used streaming as a means to achieve happiness through listening to the music they loved or if it was merely a convenient and cost-effective choice in the absence of physical formats.

To gain a better understanding, I personally experimented with using a streaming service for several months. What I found was that I couldn't derive the same happiness or establish an immersive emotional connection with the music and artists I loved. It felt like I was simply hearing music provided and streamed by the service company.

In search of inspiration, I turned to the art market, specifically paintings. There were original artworks created by the artists themselves, reproductions directly printed from the originals, and digital images of those artworks available online. I then applied this concept to the music market: 1.) music creations directly recorded or performed by artists, 2.) physical albums as reproductions of those creations, and 3.) digital music as the streaming option.

Through this contemplation, I became convinced that each of these three types of products held distinct value and could provide differential happiness to individuals. The value of possession and collection clearly existed apart from the convenience of use.

This conviction inspired me to introduce a new physical music format that would allow music fans to utilize it on their smart devices. With this new format, fans could not only enjoy the convenience of use but also experience the satisfaction of owning a tangible music product.

I strongly believed that the decline of the physical music market was not solely due to the popularity of streaming. It was also because the traditional physical formats couldn't adapt to changing device trends, leaving music fans with limited options for use. To truly understand the underlying reasons, I knew I needed an innovative music format like the current KiT Album. I firmly believe that music fans will embrace and love the KiT Album.

**STORM: Can you tell us about KiT in your own words? What is it, and how can it be used?**

**Joe Seok:** KiT is a magical key that strengthens the bond between artists and fans, enabling them to "Keep in Touch" more closely.

When we examine the music industry, its revenue is generated by activities that cater to the three fundamental needs of music fans.

1. Fans subscribe to streaming services for convenient music enjoyment on their smartphones,
2. Purchase CDs and vinyl albums to satisfy their desire to own the artist's work, and
3. Pay to attend concerts and community activities to establish direct or indirect connections with artists.

The KiT Album, as a music format, precisely fulfills all three (3) core needs of customers in the market. It is a tangible music product that allows music fans to physically possess it. With the KiT Album, fans can enjoy various album contents such as music, videos, and photos of the artist on their smart devices. Additionally, they can directly communicate with fans and artists worldwide through the Fanz community integrated within the KiT Album.

Music providers also have the opportunity to revive the declining physical music market by introducing the KiT Album, while still addressing customer needs. By incorporating the KiT Album and providing usage data of physical music album customers for the first time globally, music providers can establish more precise and direct marketing strategies that were not previously achievable with traditional physical formats. In this regard, the KiT Album can be compared to a "goose that lays golden eggs" in the music market.



**STORM: What is unique about KiT Albums and the KiT technology?**

**Joe Seok:** Among the various features of the KiT Album that I described earlier, the most valuable aspect in the future would be the collection, analysis, and provision of usage data from physical album users.

The most loyal and profitable customers in the music market are physical album buyers. This customer group also tends to purchase merchandise and concert tickets. In fact, music charts evaluate the value of one album purchase to be equivalent to 1,500 streams. However, until now, the music market has lacked any significant data beyond tracking the number of albums sold at specific stores regarding this crucial group of album buyers.

The KiT Album is pioneering the confirmation and analysis of usage data from physical album buyers, providing music providers who release KiT Albums with 40 types of analytical data on customers who use their physical albums. This data allows music providers to obtain detailed information such as the usage patterns of customers in specific regions and age groups, track-by-track usage statistics, member preferences, and regional photo preferences that are otherwise impossible to track with traditional physical formats.

In actual usage data from album buyers, it has been observed that the track-by-track playback rate on streaming services is significantly higher for the first track, which is typically the title track. However, in contrast, for physical album users, there have been cases where tracks 5 and 6 were played 10x more frequently than the first title track. It's also interesting to note that it is frequently observed that the preferences for each member of an idol band vary depending on the region.

Now, let's imagine a concert where 100,000 people attended. After the concert ends and those 100,000 attendees return home, the reality is that the concert organizers or artists have no way of knowing who those 100,000 individuals are. It's as if they danced and sang in front of a crowd of 100,000 people whose identities are completely unknown.

However, imagine if those 100,000 people received the concert tickets as KiT Albums. Before the concert day, they would use the album as usual. On the concert day itself, the KiT Album would serve as a non-reproducible ticket. And a few months after the concert, they would be able to access updated concert footage through the same KiT Album. At the same time, the concert organizers or artists would have the ability to continuously track the usage data of each of the 100,000 attendees and engage in direct communication with them.

The KiT Album has already started providing such data services through a platform called Insight and a community called Fanz. Features that enable direct interaction between artists and fans will be introduced in the latter half of this year.

Through this, the KiT Album will become a new music standard that integrates offline and online experiences.

**STORM: Given the success of KiT Albums in Korea, what do you believe needs to happen in order for KiT Albums to become popular in other major markets like the United States?**

**Joe Seok:** The KiT Album has currently sold approximately 6 million copies and is being used in 211 countries worldwide. It has also gained recognition as a physical music format from global music charts, not only in Korea but also in countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany.

Considering that we have focused on the release of K-pop albums thus far, I believe this is a remarkable achievement. However, in the early stages of our business, our goal was to sell 20,000 copies in a year, and we were ecstatic when we reached a monthly sales figure of 2,000 copies. I attribute our success to our relentless efforts in providing what the market needs, rather than any exceptional ability of myself or our company.

Yes, we have dedicated ourselves to envisioning what the market needs and developing it in advance, and those efforts have brought us to where we are today. I now dream of success in the US market.

To achieve that, my task will be to anticipate and develop what this market desires. I believe that if we can provide the best-prepared answer when the market demands it, success will naturally follow.

The KiT format is now entering the US market, and we hope for a positive response. At the same time, we are prepared to understand the unique needs of the US market. In Korea, there is a proverb that says "Not full on the first spoonfull." We understand that success won't come all at once, and we are ready to make progress in the US step-by-step.

**STORM: We love that KiT Albums offer something physical for fans to collect and artists to sell. It brings back the value proposition to selling music. But beyond the physical collectibles aspect of your products, how do you see fans interacting with the digital side of the platform and what is your vision for the future?**

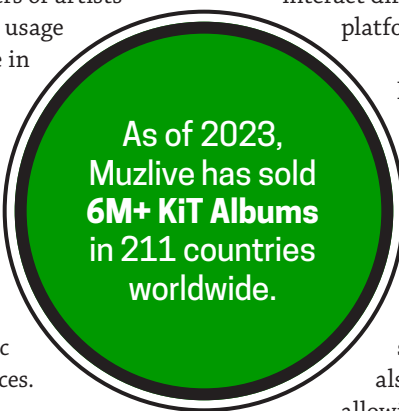
We aim to create a community of highly loyal customers through the sale of KiT Albums. We have embarked on the implementation of a fan community where artists (including emerging artists) can interact directly with their fans, using our own approach and platform.

Firstly, we launched an online service called Studio, which enables artists and labels worldwide to release their own KiT Album at no cost, through the establishment of an automated production process for KiT Albums. Artists who have released KiT Albums through Studio can use the Fanz community to introduce their albums to fans, engage in chat sessions, and even hold video signing events. In the latter half of this year, we will also provide the Insight service, which is data-driven, allowing artists and labels to directly communicate with album buyers worldwide.

We are working towards completing three core structures: the stable market establishment of the new physical music format, the community where artists and fans interact directly, and the world's first data-based Insight service. These services are being provided through [KiTbetter.com](https://www.kitbetter.com) and from 2024, when all these service functions will be implemented, KiTbetter will change the paradigm of the music market.

**STORM: We've talked a lot about consumer benefits, but what about artists and other music industry stakeholders? What kinds of artists are best suited to releasing content on a KiT Album?**

**Joe Seok:** The current music market has seen a significant decline in physical album sales. Streaming, being an intangible product, has shown limitations in revenue generation. Even well-known streaming services are recording substantial net losses. From here, we need to consider whether it is the users' love for streaming that has led to the disappearance of album sales or if it is the inconvenience of traditional albums due to changes in devices.



Music providers need to ponder whether they will simply watch the fading album market or choose alternative forms of physical albums to sustain a more productive and loyal market. We also need to take into account the clear fact that album sales generate significantly higher added value compared to streaming services. We have been putting efforts to protect the physical album market that has created good memories for us for a long time, and it seems necessary to gain market consensus for such efforts.

We are merely providing formats and platforms, and we understand that the supply of diverse and powerful content holds much greater value in this new endeavor. Now, we are ready, and we await the participation of fantastic artists who will join us in this new attempt. If the work we are doing brings forth any innovation, it will be an innovation created by content providers.

**STORM: What is one of your favorite KiT Albums so far and why?**

**Joe Seok:** There are three albums that stand out in my memory. The first one is Girl's Day's album, which was the first Smart Music Album released in 2014. At that time, the concept of alternative albums was not well established, and K-pop did not have the global influence it has today. Therefore, I didn't have high expectations for the album's sales. However, to my surprise, the album achieved remarkable success, selling approximately 10,000 copies on the first day alone, exceeding my expectations and surprising both myself and the market. And the success of this album became the foundation for me to release albums by popular K-pop artists in the future.

The second memorable album is the KiT Album released by popular K-pop idol group NCT in 2020. This album achieved an astounding milestone by reaching a sales volume of 200,000 copies, becoming the first KiT Album to achieve such a feat in terms of a specific album's sales. This success gave me the confidence that KiT Albums could be recognized as a viable



**2013**

Joe Seok sees the declining sales of CDs as CD players are replaced with the rise of smart devices.

**2014**

Seok releases the world's first Smart Music Album featuring Girl's Day, a K-Pop idol group.

**2015**

**Turning Point:**

Seok meets his current CTO and discovers a device capable of communicating with smart devices through audio transmission. He establishes MUZLIVE, Inc. marking the beginning of a new physical music format.

**2016**

Muzlive gains market traction, delivering favorable results.

**2017**

After two years of dedicated work, the KiT format is unveiled, backed by 19 patents.

**2023**

KiT Albums successfully released with various K-pop artists, selling over 6M units from over 400 artists.

alternative in the market, proving that KiT Albums have value as a new physical music format rather than just being star merchandise.

The third important album that stands out in my memory is the albums by BLACKPINK (STORM 63), who are currently enjoying global popularity. They have released not only regular albums but also individual members' albums as KiT Albums. Furthermore, even their live concert albums were released as KiT Albums. Through BLACKPINK, this precious treasure of K-pop, we have had the opportunity to introduce ourselves to the global stage, and we are so delighted to celebrate their success together.

**STORM: Who are your dream artists/collaborators for KiT?**

**Joe Seok:** We currently have albums from Jason Mraz and Snoop Dogg in the global market, and now we are eager to release albums by Billboard top-ranked artists such as Lady Gaga, Bruno Mars, Billie Eilish, and Dua Lipa as part of this new endeavor. If they join us in this new initiative, the reconstruction efforts of the fading physical album market could gain tremendous momentum. We greatly anticipate that day.



As the music industry evolves, navigating new business models and searching for more effective ways to connect with fans, it's exciting to experience something in the digital space that still puts something into our hands to hold. We are eager to see how these new advancements, rooted in tradition yet reaching towards the future, will shape the musical landscape in the years to come.

To learn more about the KiT Album format and Muzlive, visit [kitbetter.com](http://kitbetter.com).

And if you are interested in checking out our 130 page recap of CES 2023, visit [membrainllc.com/membrainstormces2023](http://membrainllc.com/membrainstormces2023) for a free download.

## STORM TRACKER

Tracking Our STORM Report Alumni!

## CHECK OUT

this issue's carefully curated playlists by clicking below:



### GRETA VAN FLEET

(STORM No. 50)

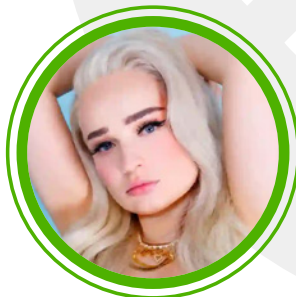
Rock fans are eagerly anticipating the release of **Greta Van Fleet's** new album *Starcatcher* dropping on July 21st, 2023. Known for their classic rock-inspired sound and powerful performances, Greta Van Fleet has garnered a dedicated following. With their highly anticipated new album on the horizon, fans can expect a blend of electrifying guitar riffs, soaring vocals, and an invigorating energy that captures the essence of their musical prowess.



### BLACKPINK

(STORM No. 63)

K-Pop sensations **BLACKPINK** just dropped an original mobile game, along with the confirmation that a brand new song is coming next! "The Girls" will be released as part of the official soundtrack for "BLACKPINK: The Game," which has already arrived for download on the Google Play and Apple App stores.



### KIM PETRAS

(STORM No. 52)

**Kim Petras'** highly anticipated album *Feed the Beast* is set to drop on June 23, 2023, much to the delight of her devoted fan base. This album promises to be a bold and vibrant showcase of Petras' infectious pop sound, featuring a collection of empowering anthems and irresistible hooks. Anticipation is running high as fans prepare to for addictive tunes that showcase her undeniable talent and impressive ability to dominate the pop music scene.



### CHINCHILLA

(STORM No. 68)

British singer-songwriter **CHINCHILLA** starts on Billboard's charts with her track "Little Girl Gone." The song, which she released on her own CHINCHILLA label (distributed through Kartel Music Group) on April 21, soars in at No. 3 on Digital Song Sales with 11,000 downloads sold. She also becomes the first female soloist in the Emerging Artists chart's six-year history to debut at No. 1. This year, the only other acts to debut atop Emerging Artists are Daisy Jones & The Six and xikers.



## STORM FORECAST

Events And Happenings For Your Radar

### SUMMER FESTIVAL FRENZY

Gear up for an unforgettable summer full of music, energy, and camaraderie at some of the most iconic music festivals of 2023. Kicking off the season is Bonnaroo, slated for June 8th to 11th in Manchester, TN. This four-day extravaganza brings a diverse lineup of world-class artists, captivating art installations, and a vibrant community atmosphere. Next up is Rolling Loud, known for its explosive hip-hop performances. Scheduled for July 28th to 30th in Miami, FL, this festival is a haven for rap enthusiasts, featuring top-tier artists and unforgettable live shows. Lollapalooza, a festival circuit staple, returns to Grant Park in Chicago, IL, from August 3rd to 6th, bringing an eclectic mix of genres, mesmerizing stages, and an immersive festival experience. Lastly, mark your calendars for Outside Lands, held from August 11th to 13th in San Francisco, CA. This festival showcases a blend of music, culinary delights, and art set in beautiful Golden Gate Park. With their distinctive vibes and impressive lineups, these summer music festivals promise celebrations of music and culture that will leave attendees with memories to last a lifetime.

### TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

June 7—June 18, 2023 | New York, NY

The Tribeca Film Festival 2023 boasts many exciting highlights to thrill cinephiles and industry insiders alike. Prepare to be dazzled by the lineup of cutting-edge films, ranging from gripping dramas and innovative documentaries to experimental works that challenge the boundaries of storytelling. This year's festival showcases emerging talent alongside celebrated filmmakers, offering a platform for diverse voices and perspectives. Engage in thought-provoking panel discussions with industry luminaries and delve into the art and craft of filmmaking. Embracing the cutting edge of technology, Tribeca 2023 presents a diverse selection of immersive Virtual Reality (VR) experiences. Step into captivating virtual worlds and explore innovative narratives, push the boundaries of storytelling and embrace the festival's commitment to emerging mediums. With its unparalleled blend of cinematic excellence, cultural celebration, and community engagement, Tribeca 2023 promises an unforgettable experience for all who attend.

### COMIC-CON IS BACK!

July 20—July 23, 2023  
San Diego, CA

San Diego Comic-Con 2023 is just around the corner! From July 20th to 23rd, the vibrant city of San Diego, CA, becomes the ultimate gathering place for fans, creators, and industry insiders alike. This convention offers an unparalleled lineup of highly anticipated panels that will leave attendees on the edge of their seats. Get exclusive insights from your favorite TV shows, movies, and comic books as creators, directors, and actors take the stage to share behind-the-scenes stories and unveil exciting announcements. Anticipate immersive panels featuring beloved franchises, interactive experiences, and engaging discussions that celebrate the ever-expanding world of entertainment. Whether you're a die-hard fan or a casual enthusiast, San Diego Comic-Con 2023 promises to be an unforgettable experience that celebrates the magic and excitement of popular culture.

### MAJOR MOVIES








Get ready for an exhilarating summer at the movies with a lineup of highly anticipated film releases! June 16th brings the latest family-friendly release from Pixar, "Elemental." Also coming June 16th, "The Flash" ushers in a brand-new era of DC storytelling. On June 23rd, Wes Anderson applies his ever-charming brand of cinematic quirk to "Asteroid City" with an all-star cast including Scarlett Johansson, Tom Hanks, Tilda Swinton, Bryan Cranston, Edward Norton, Steve Carell, and many many more. Indiana Jones returns on June 30th for "Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny," complete with his signature whip and fedora. The adrenaline continues as "Mission Impossible: Dead Reckoning - Part One" hits theaters on July 12th, promising high-stakes espionage and action. And then on July 21st, fans everywhere will have the chance to don their pink and catch the release of "Barbie" starring Ryan Gosling and Margot Robbie. Summer 2023 is shaping up to be an extraordinary season for film lovers, with these highly anticipated releases promising to deliver thrilling adventures, intense action, and whimsical delight on the big screen.

# 1 BUNT.

## STORM WARNING

The 20 Artists On Our Radar

### ICON KEY

-  YouTube
-  Spotify
-  Instagram
-  TikTok
-  Genre
-  Similar Artists
-  Label



 54.4K  4.4M

 33K  106K  Dance, Electronic  RÜFÜS DU SOL, Elderbrook  Sony

German electronic act BUNT. delivers party-friendly dance jams that draw from soul, pop, and Latin music. Having expanded their Avicii-esque folk house to incorporate horns, banjos, and fiddles, they continue to release heart-pounding dance-inducing tracks. Photo by ©2023



**2** ROYEL OTIS  
3.2K 1.3M

GRACE'S  
TOP PICK!

“Their smile-inducing music feels free of pressure, free of judgement, and free of expectation; there’s an authenticity in their lyrics and a joie de vivre in their performance that speaks volumes to who Royel Otis is, both as a band and as two individuals making art and singing songs.”  
—Atwood Magazine

📷 17K 🎵 3300 🎶 Alternative, Indie  
📍 Beach Fossils, Goth Babe 🎧 Ourness Records

Hailing from Sydney and rapidly gaining international acclaim, Royel Otis is a vibrant duo that injects a revitalizing energy into Australia’s guitar scene. With their spirited and lively melodies, they seamlessly blend beach rock vibes with an irresistible sense of happiness, captivating audiences across the globe. Their debut album *Sofa Kings* has already garnered millions of listens, solidifying their position as a rising star in the music scene. Photo by ©2023

### 3 WYATT FLORES

12.1K 1.2M



📍 N/A 🎵 237K 🎸 Country 🎧 Thomas Rhett, Shakey Graves 🎧 OEG Records

Embracing the musical energy of his Oklahoma small town and inspired by stories from his father's stint as a drummer in the Red Dirt music scene, Wyatt Flores tells his stories in his own way and craves authenticity in his lyrics, collaboration, and sound. His wide-ranging field of influences attracts listeners of multiple genres, as his fans have tallied up more than 3 million total streams across platforms. Photo by ©2022

📍 1.3M 🎵 60 🎸 R&B/Soul, Pop 🎧 FKJ, BADBADNOTGOOD 🎧 Independent

NYC native DARGZ infuses the energetic hip-hop essence of the city into the lively jazz scene of London, creating a unique sound that defies traditional genres. With a knack for collaboration, DARGZ has worked with talented emerging jazz artists and shared stages with renowned acts such as Vampire Weekend, Haim, and Interpol, rapidly establishing a growing reputation that transcends borders. Photo by ©2022

### 4 DARGZ

82 960K





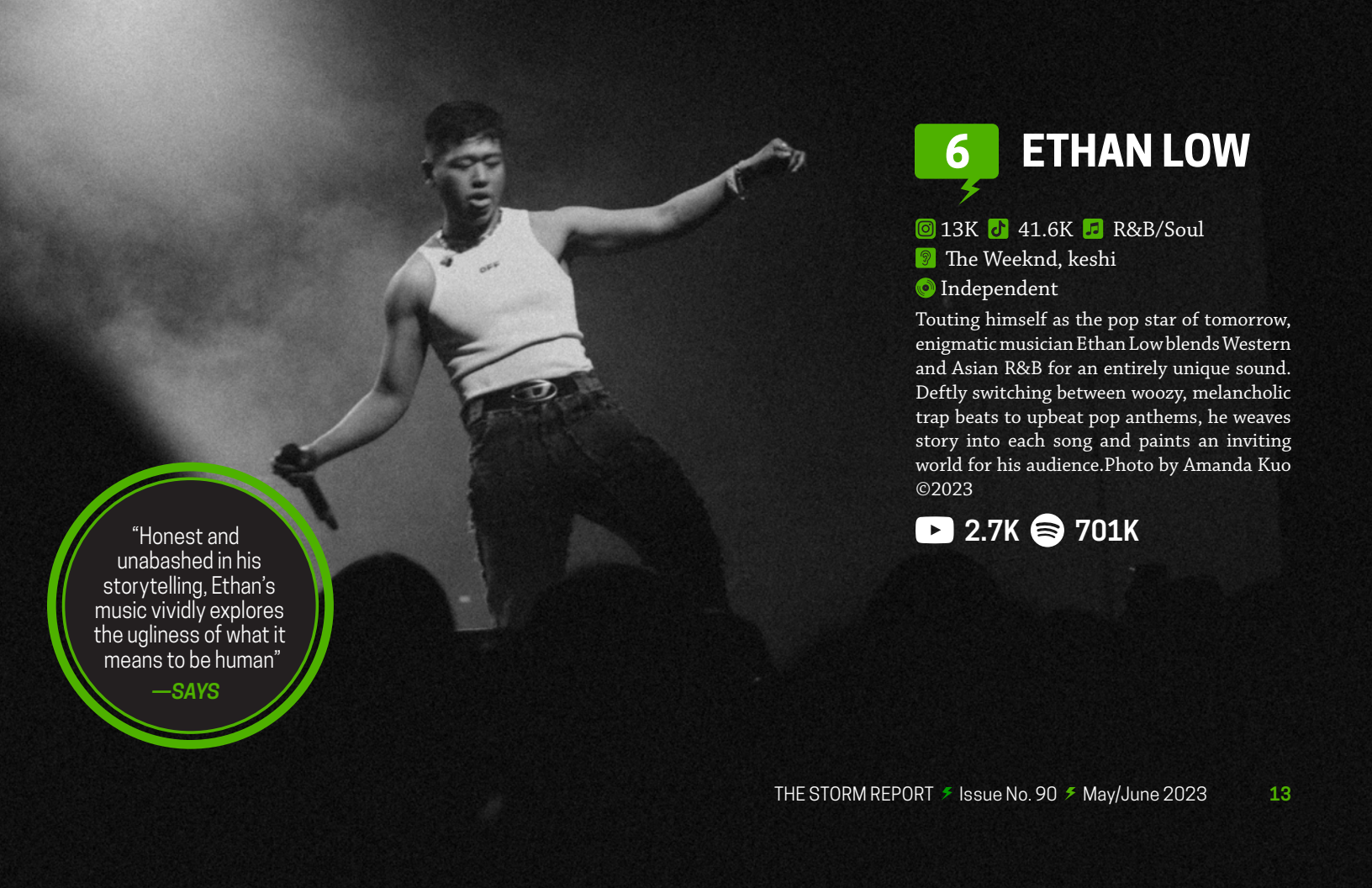
**ROBERT'S  
TOP PICK!**

## 5 RUNNNER

- 📷 8.8K 🎵 14.9K 🎧 Alternative, Indie
- 📍 Michigander, Mt. Joy
- 🎧 Run for Cover Recrods

Los Angeles-based musician Noah Weinman, known as Runnner, has spent the last five years creating music from home using various unconventional tools such as cell phones, tape recorders, and ambient sounds. In this way Runnner turns the ordinary into the extraordinary, transcending boundaries and evoking a cosmic and comforting essence. Photo by Seannie Bryan ©2022

📺 924 🎧 884K



## 6 ETHAN LOW

- 📷 13K 🎵 41.6K 🎧 R&B/Soul
- 📍 The Weeknd, keshi
- 🎧 Independent

Touting himself as the pop star of tomorrow, enigmatic musician Ethan Low blends Western and Asian R&B for an entirely unique sound. Deftly switching between woozy, melancholic trap beats to upbeat pop anthems, he weaves story into each song and paints an inviting world for his audience. Photo by Amanda Kuo ©2023

📺 2.7K 🎧 701K

“Honest and unabashed in his storytelling, Ethan’s music vividly explores the ugliness of what it means to be human”  
—SAYS

## 7 BENJAMIN AMARU

📷 13K 🎵 N/A 🎧 Alternative, Indie, Pop  
📍 Tora, BEACHPEOPLE 🎧 Independent

In just a few years, the music of Swiss singer Benjamin Amaru has undergone a remarkable transformation, transitioning from a lo-fi pop producer to an artist with an expansive and multifaceted sound. With a style showcasing a newfound sense of maturity and an effortless fusion of genres, Amaru's versatility and captivating presence are sure to enchant audiences.

Photo by Rafael dos Santos ©2022

📺 4.3K 🎧 619K





8

## PRESENCE

705K  
575K

55.9K 655K Hip Hop/Rap, Pop SadBoyProlific, GRAHAM Netwerk

Through his vulnerable approach to songwriting and emotional vocal performances, Presence has amassed a loyal community of fans. His catalog is an intimate dive into his struggles with anxiety, depression, grief, and love. Presence blends singing and rapping to evoke a roller coaster of emotions in each listener. Photo provided by management ©2023

33K N/A Dance, Electronic Flying Lotus, Susumu Yokota Brainfeeder Records

Mtendere Mandowa, commonly known as Teebs, has established himself as a consummate multimedia artist. Seamlessly blending music production and painting, he invites audiences into meticulously crafted realms – his intricate and immersive music captivates listeners, presenting a unique blend of relaxation and intrigue. Photo by Brent Waterworth ©2023



9

## TEEBBS

2.5K  
5.5K

AVA'S  
TOP PICK!

# 10 KITA ALEXANDER

📷 58.9K 🎵 9K

🎵 Alternative, Indie

🎧 Feist, HAIM

🎧 Warner Music Australia

Australian singer-songwriter Kita Alexander has captured audiences with her reflective, heart-on-sleeve music. Her distinct blend of vulnerability and empowerment has resonated with fans, amassing over 143 million global streams to date.

Photo by Rob Tennent ©2023

📺 7.6K 🎧 293.5K

JULIA'S  
TOP PICK!







# 11 RAHILL

792 278K

📸 15K 🎵 N/A 🎸 Alternative, Indie 🗺️ Say She She, Abby Sage 🎧 Big Dada (Ninja Tune)

Rahill is a multidisciplinary artist who effortlessly navigates the realms of diverse music-poetic traditions that intersect and intertwine. Drawing inspiration from her upbringing in a diasporic Iranian-American household and her lifelong exploration of various musical genres, Rahill's music possesses a compelling vitality and carries a poignant emotional weight. Photo by Bailey Robb ©2023



# 12 KAIA JETTE

📸 7.9K 🎵 210.8K

🎸 Alternative, Indie Pop

🗺️ Emei, CHINCHILLA

🎧 Independent

Kaia Jette weaves a poignant tapestry of personal truths, experiences, and imaginative storytelling through her music. Her songs are adorned with impressive vocal runs that showcase her skill, while delving into intimate realms and evoking raw emotion. Photo by Vasilisa Belokon ©2022

792 278K

# 13 AVA MAYBEE

3.7K 204K

75K 72.6K Indie, Pop GINGE, Amy Winehouse Independent

Ava Maybee is leaving a lasting impression with her bold vocals, powerful melodies, and genuine style. Her music boasts an upbeat and dance-worthy sound, accompanied by honest and heartfelt lyrics. Having started her musical journey at the age of 5, the recent graduate of NYU/Tisch has blossomed into an artist with a distinctive style and undeniable charisma. Photo by Carly Jean Sharp ©2023





## 14 MINOVA

883 197.8K

4.1K 6K Alternative, Indie Clairo, Dayglow Baby Boy Records

MINOVA, an alternative/indie singer-songwriter, producer, and musician hailing from Abu Dhabi, showcases a spirit of experimentation in their music. They mold influences into a unique and distinctive sound that is entirely their own. MINOVA's captivating blend of dream-pop guitar melodies, fuzzy synth work, clean vocals and thoughtful lyricism positions them as a compelling artist to keep an eye on. Photo provided by management ©2023

1.5K 88 Alternative, Indie Tame Impala, Four Tet Independent

The South Hill Experiment is a duo consisting of Baird and Goldwash, two brothers who originally hail from Baltimore. Embracing their childhood aspirations, their project revolves around the core values of experimentation, spontaneity, and sheer enjoyment. Defying categorization, The South Hill Experiment deliberately eludes confinement, embracing their unique and boundary-pushing approach to creating music. Photo by Leo Johnson ©2022




## 15 THE SOUTH HILL EXPERIMENT


281 190K



## 16 OLIVER CRONIN

 12K  211K  Pop

 The Kid LAROI, YUNGBLUD




 Warner Music Australia



Oliver Cronin crafts an enthralling blend of dark pop music that effortlessly balances authenticity and excitement. His songs exude a modern resonance and are meticulously crafted, showcasing his prowess as a producer, vocalist, and songwriter. With a steadily growing fanbase, his sound is sneaking onto the scene. Photo by Jacopo Lancioni © 2023

 11.6K  157K

**17** LILLY  15.7K  117.7K

JENNIFER'S  
TOP PICK!

 36K  N/A  Rock, Alternative




 Minor Threat, Nine Inch Nails  Fortune Tellers Music

Intent on defying common tropes within the rock genre, Lilly stands at the forefront of propelling the music landscape into a fresh era. With a strong emphasis on experimentation, the Los Angeles four-piece band strives to craft a distinct three-dimensional sound that boldly pushes the boundaries, setting them apart in the ever-evolving rock space. Photo by Athena Merry ©2021



“The California band embrace experimentation on their sprightly debut album, snaking through rock, jazz and electronic influences with knife-sharp lyrics.”  
—NME

**18** EDGEHILL  N/A  49.5K

 7.7K  9.4K  Rock, Pop, Alternative  Del Water Gap, Briston Maroney  Independent

Edgehill, an alternative rock group based in Nashville, is comprised of Chris Kelly, Jake Zimmermann, Andrei Olaru, and Jonathan Wilson. Renowned for their dynamic live shows and engaging online persona, Edgehill has earned impressive opportunities to perform alongside notable artists including Stephen Sanchez, Jordy Searcy, and Charlie Burg. Photo by Divina Fernando-Eblen ©2023



# 19 THEM FANTASIES

📷 4.2K 🎵 36.1K

🎵 Alternative/Indie

📍 Sure Sure, Panic! At the Disco

📍 Independent

Them Fantasies combines indie rock, alternative pop, and funk to serve up peculiar sounds with a smooth chaser. After relocating to Los Angeles from Boston during Covid, they've found an excited new audience on Tik Tok, released 3 singles in 2021, and just put out their new EP "How Modest." Be sure to look out for their on-stage antics, purple LED lasers, and heartfelt music.

Photo by Maxine Bowen ©2022

🎥 665 📶 17.9K



**20****FELICIA DOUGLASS**

📷 5.2K 🎵 1.3K 🎧 Dance, Electronic

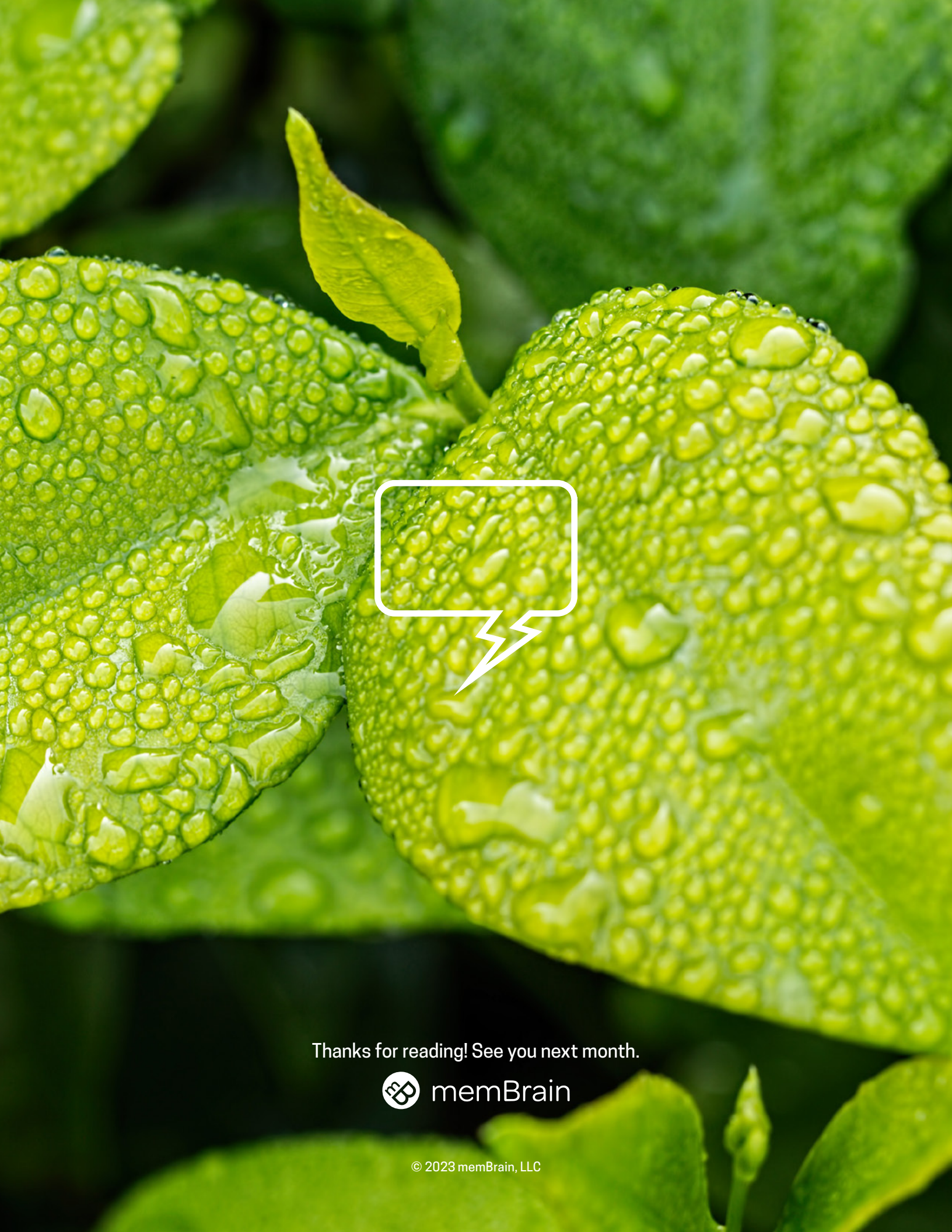
📍 Gemma, Kelly Lee Owens 🎧 Independent

Felicia Douglass is a Brooklyn-based artist who is notably a keyboardist and lead singer in Gemma. She is also a member of Dirty Projectors and Ava Luna. In addition to a number of vocal collabs with artists such as Toro y Moi, BAILE, and Helado Negro, she also produces her own electronic projects with airy melodies over wavering synth lines and tropical rhythms.

Photo by Alex Joseph ©2019

🎥 100 📶 15.5K





Thanks for reading! See you next month.

