

Your monthly
music forecast!

Lost in Austin: SXSW 2018 Review

Alok

Saweetie

Moon Taxi

G Flip

Gang of Youths

and more

 memBrain

THE STORM REPORT

ISSUE NO. 53
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Saweetie (STORM No. 53) Photo © 2018 Emilyynn Rose

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

As promised, this issue of The STORM Report includes some of the most interesting highlights from SXSW 2018 from our perspective. True to its promise of delivering the ultimate convergence of the interactive, film, and music industries, the lines between the “weeks” of the festival have started to completely blur. Technologies like AI, VR, AR, and the rise of Blockchain were consistent themes for both weeks of the festival, as was social activism - ranging from sustainability to equality and gender identity. Brands ranging from Viceland to Mars, Incorporated (Twix, M&Ms, & Maltesers) clamored to drive cultural conversation via digital channels with exciting experiential and for those 10 days, Austin became one of most powerful international marketplaces technology and entertainment. (Not to mention amazing BBQ!) This issue features just a taste of all that SXSW 2018 had to offer. Enjoy!



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EYE OF THE STORM



Tank and the Bangas (STORM no. 51) perform at The Showtime House during this year's SXSW Music Week.

Lost in Austin: SXSW 2018 Review

By Grace Slansky and Jennifer Sullivan

Since its inception 31 years ago, South by Southwest (SXSW) has evolved to be one of the most significant international platforms celebrating the convergence of entertainment, technology, and music in the world. What was once a tiny festival in the heart of Austin, Texas has expanded to include immersive branded experiences, blockbuster movie premieres, a popular Gaming Expo, and more.

With so much to see and do, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the idea of parsing through all the news coming out of the festival. But, look no further! This “Eye of the STORM” article is your one stop guide to the hottest news and trends emerging from SXSW 2018.

CONTENT

Unsurprisingly, Steven Spielberg’s film of Ernest Cline’s novel *Ready Player One* made a huge splash in Austin. Warner Bros. heavily promoted the film with a surprise premiere and a hugely popular activation that included a VR experience and various interactive sets featuring elements from the OASIS (with SXSW attendees waiting up to 3 hours in line just to participate in the experience). The premiere, which included an appearance by Steven Spielberg, generated rave reviews. According to Deadline Hollywood, prior to SXSW the film’s hashtags were ranging from 250 to 2.5K per day. Following the premiere, mentions increased to **19.3K+ per day**. And, according to Spredfast Social Analytics, the movie’s Twitter buzz reached 106M+ (over 30% of the Twitter universe) during the first 12 hours following the event.

However, the small screen had perhaps the most buzzed about activations at SXSW 2018. This year, HBO’s immersive *Westworld* experience promoting Season 2 saw festival attendees shuttled 20 minutes outside of Austin to a real-life ghost town dressed to look like Sweetwater from the show, complete with android hosts. According to marketing

platform Hyp3r, **HBO accounted for 62% of entertainment brand mentions** at SXSW and was the most popular brand overall on social media (followed by Viceland who featured photo opportunities with baby goats).

Showtime also made a big splash on Austin’s iconic Rainey Street, commandeering St. Patrick’s Day festivities with a party themed to its popular series *Shameless*. By transforming Clive Bar into The Alibi Room and inviting SXSW attendees to come celebrate “St. Gallagher’s Day,” Showtime commandeered the holiday and gave everyone an excuse to come dressed in their green finery. Adding to the excitement was the appearance of the show’s stars Shanola Hampton (V) and Steve Howey (Kev) who not only served the crowd drinks from the bar, but also spent over 2 hours snapping selfies with people in line.

Also making a lot of noise at the festival (ironically, perhaps) was John Krasinski’s *A Quiet Place*. Along with Krasinski, *A Quiet Place* stars Emily Blunt (Krasinski’s IRL wife) and young deaf actress Millicent Simmonds (known best for her role in *Wonderstruck*). One of the first films screened at SXSW, the reviews for this monster movie where the difference between silence and noise is survival, have been extremely positive setting Krasinski up for what looks to be a successful filmmaking career beyond acting.

INNOVATION

Perhaps one of the most fun activations during interactive week was **Sony’s “Wow Studio”** experience which featured about a dozen interactive demos at an air-conditioned warehouse featuring various ongoing projects, incorporating cutting-edge emerging technologies like AI, AR, VR, Immersive Audio, and more, and its latest prototypes. Among the most popular attractions were the Interactive Cube, which included projected images, sounds, lights, and vibrations onto a giant cube with interactive game elements and

a super fun A(I)R Hockey game featuring Sony's unique high-speed vision sensors (IMX382) that tracks objects at 1,000 frames-per-second, a unique predictive algorithm, and haptics technology (which gives you the opportunity to FEEL hitting a virtual puck!).

The Google Fun House activation offered a more targeted takeaway for attendees, reinforcing its latest brand campaign “Make Google Do It.” The two-story house demonstrated all of the possibilities for Google Assistant technology at home – using voice commands to trigger a lowrider to bounce, sort socks, and even mix margaritas!

And of course, there was no shortage of conversation surrounding innovation, with the 2018 SXSW Interactive Innovation Awards finalists recognizing 2017's best, most forward-thinking projects in the fields of health and bio-tech, VR and AR, AI and machine learning, privacy and security, smart cities and responsive design, and more.

Among our favorite 2018 SXSW Innovation Awards winners were *Microsoft's Hands-Free Music Project* which is an eye-controlled music environment for electronic loop-based performance and composition. It is designed using familiar design paradigms found in commercial music production software, which have been adapted to work well with eye control. As a fantastic demonstration of technology for human improvement, Microsoft believes that the Hands-Free Music Project will “restore, redefine and reinvent the music-making experience for people who are 'locked in' or are otherwise affected by severe speech and mobility impairment.”

Panels during SXSW Interactive were largely focused on the balance between technology and creativity, inclusivity and diversity, personalization, and the role of technology as a catalyst for change. A common thread throughout the conference reflected our society's mounting sense of responsibility as technology disrupts social norms, industries, and how we communicate with and understand each other. Overall, it was positive to see so many companies dedicating resources to creating consumer-first solutions rather than innovation for innovation's sake.

MUSIC

Who would we be if we didn't talk about SXSW Music Week? The true allure of SXSW can be found in its spirit of discovery, as the large majority of the nearly 2,000 artists that play approximately 6,000 sets of music over the weeklong stretch are on the rise, building their audience and solidifying their brand. We have discovered some of our most successful STORM alumni in SXSW festivals of year's past—and this year was no exception with a crop of exciting new artists.

In terms of music showcases, SXSW's size and scope has shrunk, somewhat in response to a changing music industry but also due

to valid concerns over the considerable issues that come with assembling the vast number of people that descend on downtown Austin. Taking up less real estate than prior years, there were many conspicuous absences from this year's event. Noticeably missing were the perennially well-booked Spotify House and Hype Hotel and the presence of NPR, YouTube, Pitchfork, Stereogum and Rolling Stone was negligible to non-existent.

That said, with sets taking place all over downtown Austin from noon until 2:00 a.m., and artists playing up to a dozen or more times during the week, it's easy to find a way to see just about anyone on the schedule at some point during the week.

A recent alum of The STORM Report **Tank and the Bangas** (STORM No. 51) stood out for their playful nature at their NPR Showcase. The band's Tiny Desk Concert was full of spirited funk and heavy bass, with lead singer Tarriona Ball demonstrating the value and importance of live performance for storytelling moving the entire crowd to wave their hands in the air throughout the show.

SXSW is like a World's Fair of talent—featuring artists from countries all around the world, often in country-hosted “houses.” We had the opportunity to partake in events at the House of Scandinavia, Canada House (M for Montreal, Halifax Pop Explosion, BreakOut West), Sounds Australia, The British Music Embassy, and more.

Nineteen-year-old Australian indie-pop sensation **Mallrat** (STORM No. 50) aka Grace Shaw stole hearts at SXSW 2018 with her unique blend of teenage awkwardness, mild raps and melodic vocals, rocking the Sounds Australia house. Somewhere between hip-hop and dream pop, her sound is largely comprised of bubblegum electronics and lyrics largely pulled from her day-to-day life, delivered with a poised nonchalance that reflects an artist with a refined sense of self, beyond her years.

This month's STORM “Artists on our Radar” had amazing showcases and amassed serious buzz at SXSW 2018 including Moon Taxi, G Flip, Gang of Youths, Olivia O'Brien, Sudan Archives, Anna Burch, Thandi Phoenix, Kodie Shane, FRIGS, Jerry Williams, and The Fantastic Plastics, all receiving praise from the likes of *The New York Times*, *PASTE*, and *Rolling Stone*.

And, of course, we had the chance to check out quite a few STORM Alums at the festival including Amy Shark, Billie Eilish, Chloe Foy, Findlay, Frank Turner, Gemma Ray, Khalid, KOLARS, Larkin Poe, NoMBe, Shakey Graves, Sylvan Esso, Two Feet, Shamir, Superorganism (one of the most FUN shows at the festival), and many more.

What content/innovations/music will break through this year? These are all fickle businesses, and there capturing lightning in a bottle is not a perfect science. It's time to place your bets, and we've found that SXSW is always a great place to start.

STORM TRACKER

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



ZENDAYA

(STORM No. 1)

Triple threat **Zendaya** (STORM No. 1) has managed to stay a fan-favorite throughout her career, most recently winning Favorite Movie Actress at the 2018 Kids' Choice Awards for her multi-talented musical performance in *The Greatest Showman*.



SHAWN MENDES

(STORM No. 20)

19-year-old singer-songwriter **Shawn Mendes** (STORM No. 20) has an impressive month, receiving the award for Favorite Male Artist at the 2018 Kids' Choice Awards, the Juno Fan Choice Award, and Single of the Year at the 2018 Juno Awards in Vancouver.



RUN THE JEWELS

(STORM No. 22)

Run the Jewels (STORM No. 22) teamed up with everyone's favorite animated grandpa-grandson duo, Rick and Morty for their video "Oh Mama." The video also served as an announcement that they will be headlining the Adult Swim Festival in Los Angeles 10/6-10/7

Events and happenings
for your radar.

STORM FORECAST

COMING TO YOU LIVE!

Eager to see some awesome acts live, but not ready to brave the festivals? Don't worry, a few of your favorite bands are kicking off tours at the beginning of next month! On 5/2 U2 launches their *eXPERIENCE + iNNOCENCE* tour. Then on 5/4, catch *TDE: The Championship Tour* hitting the road with the likes of Kendrick Lamar, SZA, ScHoolboy Q (STORM No. 12), and more! And if you just can't get enough of *Reputation*, see Taylor Swift at a stadium near you starting on 5/8.

MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU

May is always a big month for the *Star Wars* franchise, what with Star Wars Day on May the Fourth. Next month will be even more space-filled than normal with the release of *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, coming soon to a theater near you!

FLICK FRENZY

It's starting to warm up, and that means it's time to take advantage of the air conditioning that movie theaters have to offer. Why not cool down with one of these highly anticipated upcoming releases? On 4/20 Amy Schumer is bringing audiences her newest comedy *I Feel Pretty*. Then get ready for *The Gospel According to André* (4/27), Melissa McCarthy in *Life of the Party* (5/11), and *Deadpool 2* (5/18).

MEMORIAL DAY MADNESS

Who doesn't love a long weekend? Not only does Memorial Day provide us with an extra day to spend time with loved ones and come together around some delicious food, there's also plenty of music! Catch festivals *Lightning in a Bottle*, *Boston Calling*, and *BottleRock* to name a few.

SOUNDTRACK TO SPRING

The sun is shining and some of our favorite STORM alumni are bringing you the perfect soundtrack for your spring barbeque. Let the smooth voice of Leon Bridges (STORM No. 26) serenade you with *Good Thing*, out on 5/4. Then be sure to catch Courtney Barnett (STORM No. 26) with her album *Tell Me How You Really Feel* and James Bay's (STORM No. 16) *Electric Light* both dropping on 5/18.

STORM WARNING

THE 20 ARTISTS ON OUR RADAR

Rank	Artist	Audio/Video	Label	Target Demo	Score
1	ALOK	 	Spinnin' Records	College Kids, 20-Somethings	10673
2	SAWEETIE	 	ICY/Artistry Worldwide/ Warner Bros.	Teenagers, College Kids, 20-Somethings	1735
3	MOON TAXI	 	RCA Records	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings, Young Professionals	1411
4	G FLIP	 	N/A	Teenagers, College Kids	978
5	GANG OF YOUTHS	 	Mosy Recordings	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings	542
6	OLIVIA O'BRIEN	 	Island Records	Teenagers, College Kids	139
7	SUDAN ARCHIVES	 	Stones Throw Records	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings, Young Professionals	132
8	LEDISI	 	Verve/Universal	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings	109
9	ANNA BURCH	 	Polyvinyl Record Co.	20-Somethings, Young Professionals	62
10	POPPY	 	I'm Poppy Records, Mad Decent	Teenagers College Kids	54
11	THANDI PHOENIX	 	N/A	College Kids, 20-Somethings	53
12	SATORI	 	N/A	College Kids, 20-Somethings	30
13	KODIE SHANE	 	Epic/Sony Records, GreystonePark/ Young Heart Throb	Teenagers, College Kids, 20-Somethings	26
14	FRIGS	 	Arts & Crafts	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings	13
15	JERRY WILLIAMS	 	Unsigned	College Kids, 20-Somethings, Young Professionals	7
16	YONAKA	 	Atlantic Records	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings	4
17	ZOLITA	 	N/A	College Kids, 20-Somethings	3
18	BAUM	 	N/A	Teenagers College Kids, 20-Somethings	2
19	JD MCCRARY	 	N/A	Teenagers	1
20	THE FANTASTIC PLASTICS	 	Altercation Records	20-Somethings, 30-Somethings	0.1

Click here for



STORM has a new formula!

Artists are now ranked by the **number of Shazams** for their most recent track, divided by the number of days that track's been available online.

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** by clicking on the buttons above.

SYMBOL KEY

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



1 ALOK

📺 653K 📺 5781457 📺 5.6M
🔊 Deep House, Brazilian Bass
© Tchami, Oliver Heldens

Arguably the biggest DJ to come out of Brazil, Alok made a name for himself in dance music in 2016 with his hit “Hear Me Now.” His unique sound pioneered the genre “Brazilian Bass,” known for its deep, groovy basslines. After another hit, “Big Jet Plane” to end 2017, Alok’s notoriety is only expected to increase throughout the 2018 festival season.

Photo © 2016 Gustavo Arrais

**IAN'S
TOP PICK!**

2

SAWEETIE

68K 8984 593K

Rap, Hip Hop

© Cardi B, Missy Elliott

90s rhyme-inspired fashion icon Saweetie is unapologetically making an entrance in the mainstream music world. Her 2017 knockout single "ICY GRL" racked up 10 million views on YouTube in just under 3 weeks and over 5 million on Spotify. A national tour and more hits to come are just the beginning for this female emcee.

Photo © 2018 Sasha Samsonova

"This is what hairflips would sound like if they made music."
—Briana Younger, *Pitchfork*



3

MOON TAXI

21.1K 98,398 32.9K

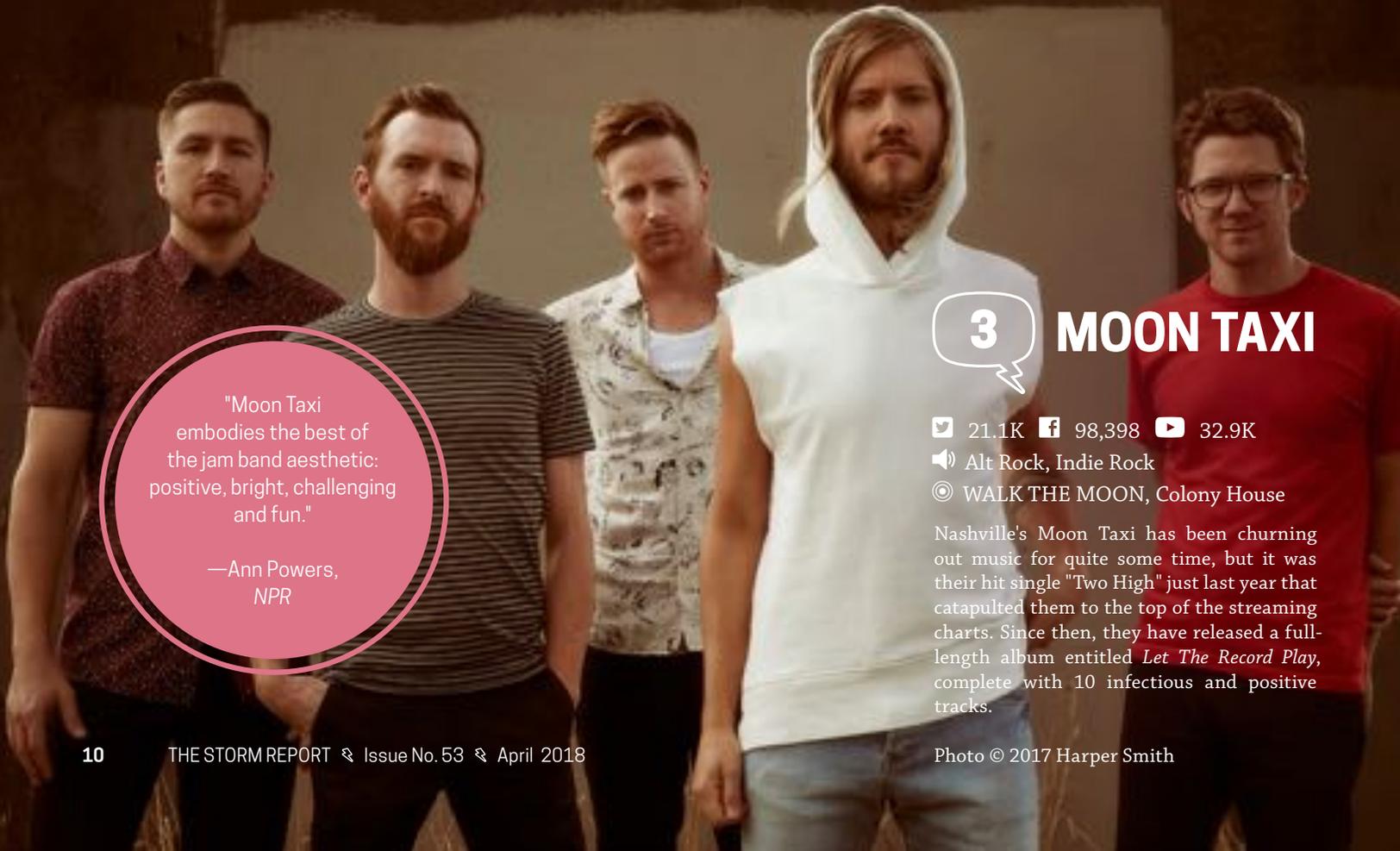
Alt Rock, Indie Rock

© WALK THE MOON, Colony House

"Moon Taxi embodies the best of the jam band aesthetic: positive, bright, challenging and fun."
—Ann Powers, *NPR*

Nashville's Moon Taxi has been churning out music for quite some time, but it was their hit single "Two High" just last year that catapulted them to the top of the streaming charts. Since then, they have released a full-length album entitled *Let The Record Play*, complete with 10 infectious and positive tracks.

Photo © 2017 Harper Smith





4 G FLIP

📺 688 📺 3,390 📺 18.8K

🔊 Indie Pop

© Maggie Rogers, Lorde

One of the breakouts from this year's SXSW Music Week, G Flip may only have one track out, but she is a force to be reckoned with. Her self-produced single "About You" is a masterpiece of bedroom pop, complete with layered percussion and synths. We can't wait to see what she'll release next!

Photo © 2018 Reuben Moore



JENNIFER'S
TOP PICK!

5 GANG OF YOUTHS

📺 7244 📺 61423 📺 52.4K

🔊 Indie Rock, Alt Rock

© U2, Middle Kids

Indie rock quintet Gang of Youths formed just out of high school in Australia. Since their inception, they have made a name for themselves, most recently sharing their brooding vocals on their newest single "The Heart Is A Muscle." The catchy beat and honest lyrics capture the band's brand of Indie Rock and leave listeners wanting more.

Photo © 2018 Sergey Osipov



6 OLIVIA O'BRIEN

📺 249K 📺 49085 📺 295K

🔊 Pop

© Hailee Steinfeld, Ariana Grande

Olivia O'Brien first garnered some publicity and notice from the public for her vocals on the hit single "I hate u, I love u" produced by gnash (STORM No. 32). Since then, she has released several singles and an EP entitled *It's Not That Deep*, all of which highlight O'Brien's melodic vocals and increasingly raw lyrics.

Photo © Nesrin Danan



SUDAN ARCHIVES

📺 1662 📺 10143 📺 11.7K

🔊 World, Funk

© Lion Babe, Hiatus Kaiyote

Sudan Archives blends diverse styles including Sudanese fiddling, R&B, West African rhythms, and experimental electronic music in a way we have never seen before. The singer/violinist is releasing truly unique tracks that have listeners begging for more, including those that saw her killer performance at SXSW this year.

Photo © 2017 Robb Klassen



8 LEDISI

🐦 408K 📘 1022489 📺 563K

🔊 R&B

© Jill Scott, Ms. Lauren Hill

Ledisi's melodic voice is soothing beyond belief. Not only does the R&B singer have an incredible range and smooth vocals, she's got 12 GRAMMY nominations to boot! Her most recent full-length album *Let Love Rule* impresses us, just as her noteworthy career does. Catch her on her *Let Love Rule* Tour with Melanie Fiona and Tweet, May 24 to June 17.

Photo © 2017 JUCO

"Ledisi's eclectic mixture of rock, blues, hip-hop, classic soul, and jazz-influenced vocals truly put her in a league of her own.

—BET

9 ANNA BURCH

🐦 1648 📘 4015 📺 5131

🔊 Indie Pop

© Liz Phair, the Go-Go's

Another of the 2018 SXSW favorites, Anna Burch released her debut album *Quit the Curse* just a couple months ago and is already seeing positive results. Polyvinyl discovered Burch organically through word of mouth, and the partnership seems to be working out for everyone involved. Expect to see more from this up-and-comer.

Photo © 2018 Ebru Yildiz





10 POPPY

GRACE'S
TOP PICK!

📺 189K 📺 289512 📺 742K

🔊 Pop

© Marina and the Diamonds, Robyn

Poppy is an enigma. She rose to fame with a series of highly conceptualized YouTube videos and since there her fan base has grown exponentially. Along with her creative director Titanic Sinclair, she has crafted a bubblegum persona in which Poppy claims quite literally have been born from the internet. Theories and characters aside, Poppy's brand of tech-influenced pop is nothing short of infectious.

Photo © 2017 Titanic Sinclair

"The now-monomymic Poppy's light-as-a-MacBook-Air voice darts through motorik rhythms and 8-bit bursts while trilling simple mantras about fame and the curiosities that come along with online life and hypertargeted fame."

—Rolling Stone

11 THANDI PHOENIX

📺 658 📺 4294 📺 8681

🔊 R&B, Electropop

© FKA Twigs, Halsey

Songstress Thandi Phoenix is being touted as one of Australia's most promising female artists. Her highly-emotive track "Standing Too Close" is effortlessly catchy complete with electro beats, making her one to watch.

Photo © 2018 Jordan Munns





12 SATORI

📺 N/A 📺 27571 📺 N/A

🔊 House, Deep House, Electro-World

© Solomun, Jamie Jones

Satori takes advantage of electronic beats, a world of influences, and seemingly infinite creativity to create music that almost cannot be contained by genre. His "Syria" Remix has over 2.5 million streams on Spotify and supportive listeners to back him up.

Photo © 2018 SBCLTR PHOTO CREW



13 KODIE SHANE

📺 53.1K 📺 39195 📺 455K

🔊 Hip Hop, Rap, R&B

© 6LACK, Ashanti

Rapper/Singer Kodie Shane is the sole female member of Lil Yachty's Sailing Team. Her infectious energy and undeniable talent as a performer are skyrocketing her to the forefront of the Hip Hop scene. Earlier this year she released the atmospheric mixtape *Big Trouble Little Jupiter* and we cannot wait to see what she drops next.

Photo © 2017 D.Wang (Motion Family)



14 FRIGS

📺 480 📺 2799 📺 1732

🔊 Alternative

© Patti Smith, Kim Gordon

Toronto-based FRIGS has earned a reputation for putting on a near-hypnotic live performance, something fans experiences at this year's SXSW. In the studio, they continue to release equally mesmerizing tracks, and their latest album *Basic Behavior* is no exception.

Photo © 2017 Chelsea Ivan

15

JERRY WILLIAMS

📺 4027 📺 7217 📺 6515

🔊 Indie Pop

© Angus & Julia Stone, Lily Allen



The last 12 months have been a whirlwind for self-releasing artist Jerry Williams. Not only has she done a stream of wildly successful live shows, starting with SXSW 2017 and coming full circle at SXSW 2018, but she has also been recognized as Topshop's New Favourite Musician.

Photo © 2018 @shotbyphox

16

YONAKA

📺 3363 📺 7437 📺 6289

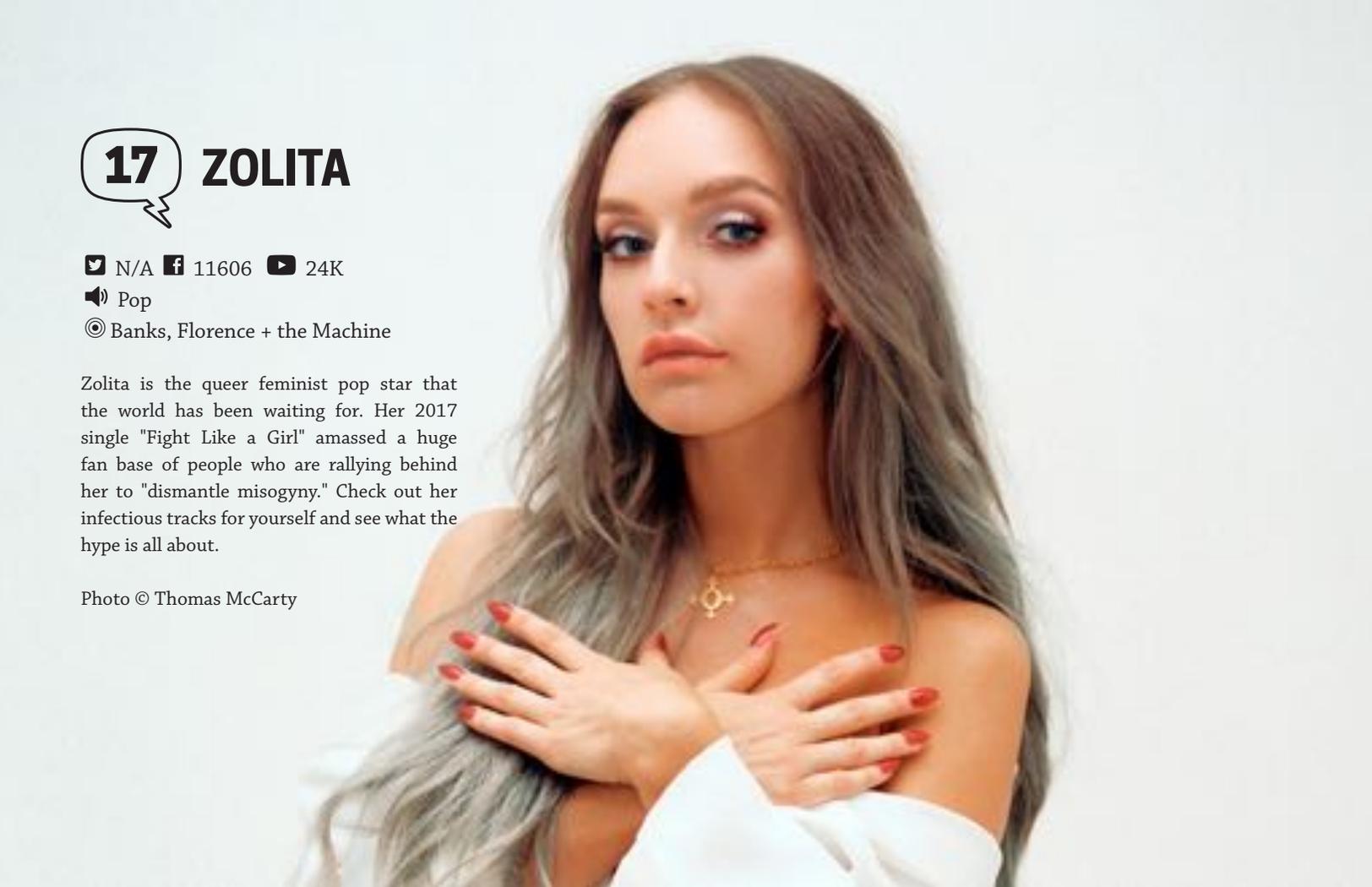
🔊 Alternative

© Gin Wigmore, Royal Blood



YONAKA do not shy away from a hard-hitting track. The English quartet leans into heavy riffs, energetic performances, and melodic hooks, bringing fans something worth talking about. The group does not show signs of slowing down, so expect to catch some enticing new track soon.

Photo © 2018 provided by label



17 ZOLITA

📺 N/A 📺 11606 📺 24K

🔊 Pop

© Banks, Florence + the Machine

Zolita is the queer feminist pop star that the world has been waiting for. Her 2017 single "Fight Like a Girl" amassed a huge fan base of people who are rallying behind her to "dismantle misogyny." Check out her infectious tracks for yourself and see what the hype is all about.

Photo © Thomas McCarty



18 BAUM

📺 1314 📺 12822 📺 7878

🔊 Alt-Pop

© Sigrid, Daughter

BAUM channels retro-grit in each of her releases, aiming to create music that helps others feel a sense of empowerment. She's making waves with her grounded voice and honest messages, both of which are showcased on her EP *Ungodly*, released just last month!

Photo © 2017 Shervin Lainez

19

JD MCCRARY

5832 71131 164K

Pop, R&B

© (Young) Michael Jackson, (Young) Justin Bieber

JD McCrary may be young, but he is a force to be reckoned with! With an impressive voice and infectiously positive personality to boot, this 10-year-old is soon to be unstoppable. Not only has he performed for some of the biggest audiences, including a performance with Childish Gambino on the 2018 GRAMMYS, he is slated to play young Simba in the star-studded remake of *The Lion King*.

Photo © 2018 Birdie Thompson



20

THE FANTASTIC PLASTICS

3787 3889 5720

Electropop

© DEVO, The Cars

Sci-Fi inspired duo The Fantastic Plastics blends electro and new wave elements to create a sound that is both futuristic and distinctly retro. One of the most unique bands on the 2017 VANS Warped Tour, this two-piece has fully committed to living and working as if the future is now.

Photo © 2017 provided by the band



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Thanks for reading! See you next month.

