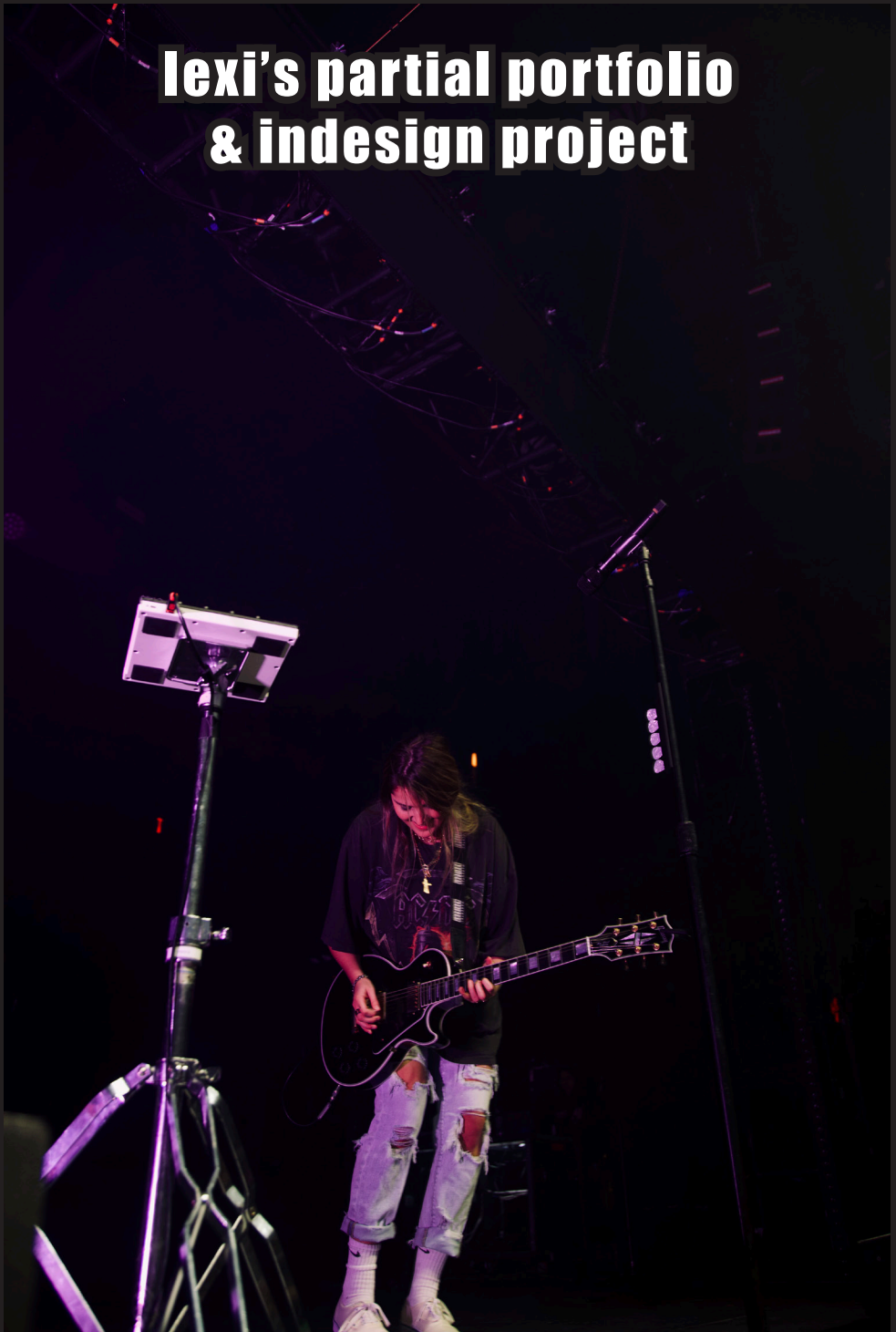


lexi's partial portfolio & indesign project





2019 seemed like a big year for you and with a new album releasing in a brand new decade, what goals do you want to accomplish this year?

I think I'm trying to stay really present with the album release and not focus too much on what I want to achieve in 2020 overall. Off the top of my head, I definitely want to make this upcoming tour my best ever, crush the Coachella set and write a second album.

What inspirations (both personal and musical) influenced *How To Be Human*?

The album came pretty much from a place of angst and confusion! Being in your twenties is super weird and hard, so I basically derived all my personal inspiration from my experiences over the last couple years with trying to be a human/adult. Musically, to some degree, I'm influenced by pretty much everything I listen to - I think all artists are.

What has been your craziest tour/festival story?

I'm pretty tame honestly, as is my team...I really focus on taking care of myself on the road and getting a lot of sleep...so I don't have any crazy stories off the top of my head...Sorry I'm a narc!!!

You've released a few singles from the record already, from "*How To Be Human*" and "*I Was In Heaven*," but out of the entire album, do you have a favorite track? If so, what was the story behind it?

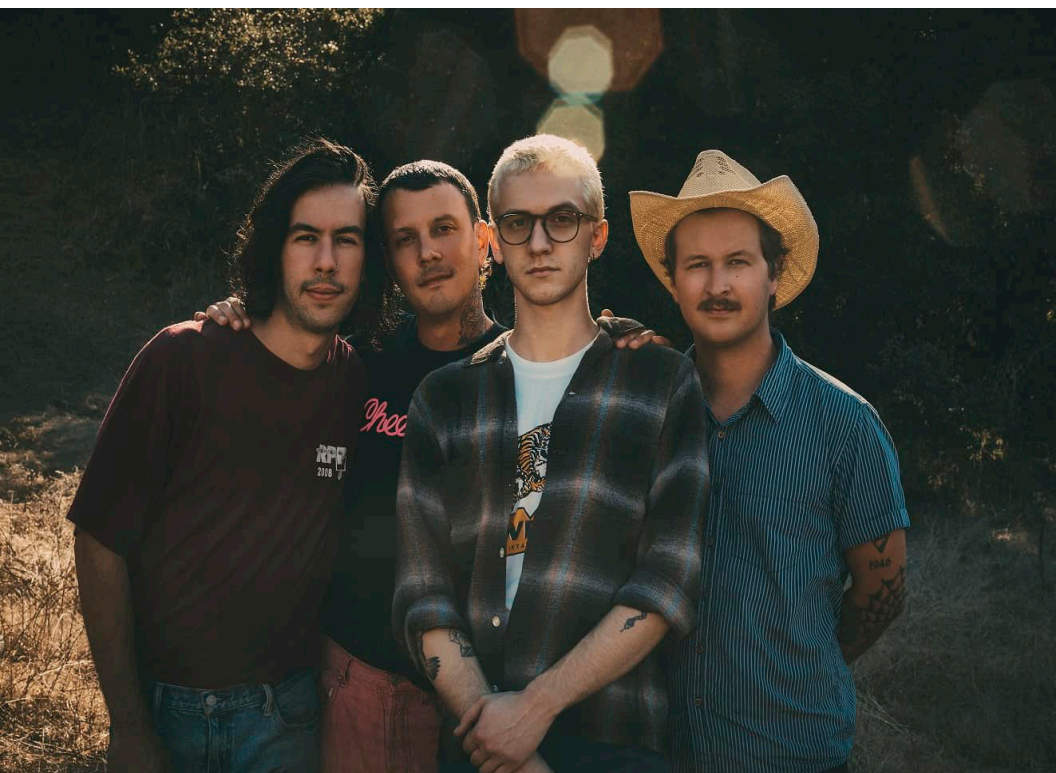
I love "NJ" - it's the song I was most scared to put out, meaning it was the most vulnerable for me. Also, just from a creative standpoint, I love the production.

How did you first become interested in music?

I grew up right outside NYC, so my family went into the city for Broadway shows and concerts super often. My parents love music, they always had music blasting in the kitchen and living room while making dinner or in the morning when we were all waking up. They had me and my brother in piano lessons basically from birth and just always encouraged us to be creative.

Samples, Sonnets, and Surf-Punk

An Interview with The Frights (Excerpts)



Words By Lexi Lane
Images By Rowan Daly

When Mikey Carnevale, lead singer of San Diego-based band The Frights, sat down to write what eventually became the group's newest album *Everything Seems Like Yesterday*, he had initially planned for it to be a solo endeavor. However, through discussions with the other band members, bassist Richard Dotson, drummer Marc Finn and guitarist Jordan Clark, what Carnevale had begun to create led to the latest evolution in The Frights' discography.

Carnevale holed up in his grandmother's California cabin to complete the album, a very Thoreau-esque move, only he brought Dotson along to run the record's production. The duo set out to create an acoustic album that utilized everyday sounds (phone call snippets, laughter, to name a few) as creative-but-natural samples. The result is a brilliant and cohesive entity, designed as a story almost, with parts and pages that'd be missed without listening to the full body of work — from the beginning ("24") to the end ("25").

Lyricism played a large role in this album as well. Carnevale's love of poetry — shown both through writing his own on the side and the works of Bukowski, Ginsberg and Plath — manifested itself beautifully within the lines of different tracks on *Everything Seems Like Yesterday*.



LL: What was the San Diego show like? How was that?

MC: It was insane. It was probably the craziest show of our career. It was a free show and it was in a public space. It was at Balboa Park, which, fun fact, is the biggest urban park in America, even bigger than Central Park, which is kind of crazy. I didn't know that til recently. But, it was just crazy. 5,000 people showed up. It was ridiculous.

LL: Were they expecting that many people?

MC: I have no idea. I don't think so. We just got permits through the city to do it and there was not a single person from Balboa Park there. There wasn't a single cop. There wasn't a fire marshall. It was so bizarre. I don't know if they just didn't take it seriously, but it was wild. I don't know how it happened, but it did. It reminded me of a show you would hear about from the 60s or 70s where it just went really bad, because nobody gave a shit to make sure everyone was safe. It was really weird; I don't know what the fuck happened. There were five security guards total for 5,000 people, but it was amazing. One of the best shows that we ever played.

LL: Did you have any particular musical influences when making the new record? Or just things you wanted to try?

MC: I mean, as far as my musical influences, I'm really bad at keeping up with new music and new bands. If I discover new bands, I'll take a good year, at least, and just learn everything about that one band. So, I end up having a lot of knowledge about a few select bands. Recently, those bands have been The Grateful Dead and Wilco. Wilco's been my favorite band for the past three or four years, so there was influence there. With that being said, I think it's still relatively different. I don't write about the same things that either of those bands write about. I don't think it conveys the same message or theme. It always seems to find its way back to sounding like me at some point. I've heard people say it sounds like Bright Eyes. I have a hard time noticing, but I love Bright Eyes.

LL: The record has some really unique-but-cool transitions from song to song, for example the vocal cut-out towards the end of "Kicking Cans". Was that a conscious decision when creating the album and formatting the tracklist?

MC: The whole album was recorded in sequence, so we recorded it from the first song on it and ended with the last song ("25"). Everything we did was a conscious decision. For the end of "Kicking Cans" specifically, we recorded that last bit. I FaceTimed Richard on his phone. I played through FaceTime and he recorded it through a microphone. That was how the end of "Kicking Cans" got so muffled-sounding. As we got into the fourth or fifth song, we kept thinking, 'Oh, shit. We're gonna run out of ideas,' because there's only so much you can do with natural sounds, but we ended up being able to keep popping things out. We definitely worked our asses off trying to keep it interesting.

LL: When you were listening to the record before it was released, what thoughts were you having?

MC: I was trying to listen to it from different points of view, so I would try to listen to it from an average fan's point of view. I would try to listen to it from a young fan's point of view and an old fan's point of view. I just try to. It's impossible. It's a stupid thing to try to do, because I know no matter what I think, people aren't going to think that as well. At least, not everybody's going to think that. It's totally an unhealthy thing to do. I would just try to imagine if I was listening to this for the first time what my initial thoughts would be. You can never, because the way people listen to music today, they don't listen to it the same way somebody who just made it would. They're super invested in the project. It comes out on Spotify and they listen to the singles. They skip through and bounce around. If you think too hard about it, it kind of bums you out, but nothing you can do about it.



"I think whatever our next record's gonna be is going to be more confusing to fans. With this record specifically, we finally reached a point where we can literally do whatever we want to do. It's never felt more freeing to just make our music together and play together. The next record, if people think this one pissed them off, I'm really excited to see what the next one does."



self-written review // chelsea peretti
courtesy of google images

Chelsea Peretti's "Foam and Flotsam" Is Pure Comedic Gold

In pure 2020 fashion, Chelsea Peretti, who stars as the iconic Gina Linetti in NBC's *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*, dropped a new EP "Foam and Flotsam" that's just as sarcastic and brilliant as one would expect.

The five track release follows in the same vein as her co-star Andy Samberg's musical endeavor in *The Lonely Island*. Peretti, however, is doing it as a solo artist and paving the new path and possible resurgence of prominent comedians blending with music.

"Foam and Flotsam" is a prime example of today's comedic culture — satirical, slightly self-deprecating, and spot-on societal references. For example, the EP opens with "LATE", where Peretti details the experience of waiting for someone over a calming guitar melody. Towards the end, through an allusion to Carly Simon, we find out the song is about herself but love it either way — even if she shows up late with a coffee.

There's also a few features on the EP, including fellow comedian Reggie Watts on "OATMILK", where the duo asks the eyeroll question of "Do you have oat milk?" over an electronic dance beat. Watts appears at the end, reminiscent of how most Top 40 songs feature an artist almost randomly at the very end. Yet, in this case, Peretti gives the new comedic club anthem for young millennials.

On the flipside and next song off "Foam and Flotsam", Peretti teams up with musician CHIKA on "CHORE". The song, while still coming from the comedy side, is the one listeners could play on a daily basis. The production and large scale vocals on the track are genuinely incredible, making this song, if any from the EP, most worth it to listen to first.

Peretti's EP ends with "DAD", a song with a slight off-kilter tribute to dads, that feels the closest to *Lonely Island* influence. The last of the three features on the release, "DAD" also includes a guest appearance from *Imperial Teen*'s Will Schwartz.

"Foam and Flotsam" also has the credentials to back itself up. Tracks off Peretti's EP were produced by Koolhaas, the man behind various hits from Doja Cat, One Direction, and even Flo Rida's "Right Round". She also has received shoutouts about the record from other prominent comedians like John Mulaney.

Overall, Peretti's "Foam and Flotsam" is an eclectic-but-exciting mix of sonic influences meets internet humor that's definitely worth a listen, for being able to cheer listeners up during bleaker times.

The Magnificent Draw of BTS' BANG BANG CON (Excerpt)

BTS are arguably the biggest band in the world right now, both with global commercial success and a fanbase (ARMY) spreading from South Korea, North America, and many other global regions. Their latest album Map of the Soul: 7 dropped in February and was both a tribute to the bond the seven members (Jin, V, Jungkook, Jimin, RM, SUGA, J-Hope) have with each other and their fans.

Because of this, it came as no surprise that after the cancellations of their planned upcoming tour due to COVID-19, that they had to put something else creative together. So, along came BANG BANG CON, an entire weekend where old BTS concerts would stream in full on YouTube and Weverse.

Airing in KST, over a million fans tuned in to the streams each night from a variety of different time zones. The first night of the concert replay lineup included 2015 BTS LIVE: The Most Beautiful Moment in Life On Stage, 2016 BTS LIVE [Most Beautiful Moment In Life On Stage: Epilogue], BTS 2014 LIVE TRILOGY: EPISODE II The Red Bullet (2014 Memories), and BTS 3rd MUSTER [ARMY.ZIP+].

Both new and old members of the ARMY, or even people who had yet to experience BTS prior, were able to have a free front row seat to the band's live show evolution that would cost hundreds of dollars. The band's most standout merch, the Army Bomb Light Sticks that are typically held in the crowd, were able to be linked to the Weverse app to mimic the light show from a living room or bedroom comfort.

One of the most standout moments from the first night of BANG BANG CON, was "Tony Montana", a rap song from BTS member Suga's solo endeavor as Agust D in 2016. However, it was performed during a concert on the livestream as a collaboration between SUGA and Jimin and was absolutely worth the wait. Any performance of a song alluding to Scarface is meant to be mind-blowing.

The lineup for night two of the streaming weekend included 2017 BTS LIVE TRILOGY EPISODE III THE WINGS TOUR IN SEOUL, 2017 BTS LIVE TRILOGY EPISODE III THE WINGS TOUR THE FINAL (2017 Memories), BTS 4th MUSTER [HAPPY EVER AFTER], and BTS WORLD TOUR 'LOVE YOURSELF' SEOUL. Several music videos and dance rehearsal videos were also streamed intermittently as transitions to keep viewers just as hyped as watching the actual concerts.

Watching the band grow over the span over several concerts and years, while also changing various hair dye colors, was a unique experience, especially without personally attending a BTS concert before. They made use during the Wings tour in Seoul of riding themed boats through the crowd during "Interlude: Wings" and a few mechanical hot air balloons later on in the setlist.



**Phoebe Bridgers' "Garden Song" Cuts Deep Into
Your Soul (Excerpts)**

review/words - lexi lane



With her haunting-but-beautiful combination of breathy vocals and airtight lyricism, Phoebe Bridgers' "Garden Song" taps into the feelings of pure nostalgia that lie dormant in most of us, but bubble to the surface the second the first note begins.

There is truly no better way to experience any track from singer-songwriter Phoebe Bridgers' repertoire than alone in a dark room, which was exactly the tradition I continued for her newest single release for "Garden Song." It's a unique thing that not many artists besides Bridgers are able to do — have each and every individual lyrical body of work take up just the right amount of space. Her latest song proves she doesn't have any plans to stop this brilliant phenomenon any time soon, and I am totally okay with that decision.

"Garden Song" is Bridgers' first solo release since her debut LP, 2017's *Stranger in the Alps* — a heartbreakingly cohesive masterpiece that breaks your heart, puts it back together, and breaks it a little bit more before the eleven tracks are finished. If you haven't heard this record, or of Bridgers at all, consider this your first introduction and a great place to start this emotional journey you're about to embark on.

Although her album was released three years ago, Bridgers hasn't been laying dormant in the music industry. In 2018, she formed an indie female supergroup-of-sorts with Julien Baker and Lucy Dacus known as *boygenius* and they dropped an EP. The following year, Bridgers joined forces with a little underground artist named Conor Oberst to release *Better Oblivion* Community Center's first album. Oh, yeah, and if Oberst's name rings a bell, he's not underground in the slightest, but the lyrical legend behind *Bright Eyes*. Within a three year span, Phoebe Bridgers hasn't slowed down and doesn't seem to have plans to stop anytime soon.

Now that you've caught up on the backstory, let's dive into the weeds of the song that is "Garden Song." (Which, if you've seen the music video, this first sentence has a hidden pun. Got it yet?) Bridgers can do a lot well when it comes to creating her musical masterpieces, however, the one thing she does best is her ability to draw listeners in to a state of self-reflection and analysis of past memories.

This is exacerbated by the song's dizzy, hypnotizing beat that starts off the track, then hides behind Bridgers' vocals subtly once the first verse begins.

This is exacerbated by the song's dizzy, hypnotizing beat that starts off the track, then hides behind Bridgers' vocals subtly once the first verse begins.

As for Bridgers staring into the possible past (or what feels that way), comes lyrical highlights in "Garden Song" at this current moment in time. They're also the lines that comprise the stunning chorus of this track. I listen to it and it feels meant to be.

***I don't know when you got taller,
See our reflection in the water,
Off a bridge at the Huntington,
I hopped the fence when I was seventeen***

It feels nostalgic and heart-wrenching, but completely open to each listener's individual interpretation. The first lyric within the chorus is a primarily universal experience — one of seeing someone you haven't for a long time, and seeing characteristics about them change as time goes on. Even if again, like the skinhead example, you haven't looked off a bridge in what is presumably a reference to California like Bridgers has, you still feel the gutting emotions as if you were there. There's something commendable to be said for a songwriter's capability when they're able to do just that.

Within the second verse of "Garden Song," Bridgers smoothly makes references to movies and how "the screen turns into a tidal wave." If you're watching the accompanying music video that goes with this track, you were likely pulled into the dreamlike state as I was once these visuals started appearing on screen. There's giant colorful monsters. There's comedian Tig Notaro in the background dressed like the grim reaper.

"Garden Song" came to fruition at Van Nuys' Sound City Studios and was a collaborative production process between Bridgers and previous *Alps* producers Tony Berg and Ethan Gruska. As for the music video, the majority of visual surprises and somewhat-strange creatures came from Bridgers' younger brother Jackson, who was told to surprise her when it came to her stoned experience and directed the video. I don't get stoned, but my sober self too would even be surprised if I saw Tig Notaro as an omen of death. Then I would laugh and be totally here for it, which was exactly my experience watching.

thanks for reading! <3