

There is Also Risk

Exploring Vulnerability in Songwriting Through the Making of a Record



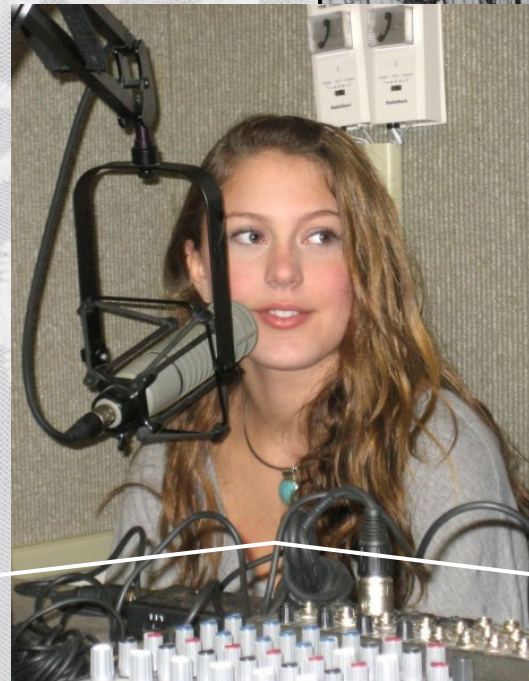
Genevieve Matthew

The background of the slide features a close-up of a white wedding dress with intricate lace detailing. A hand with a ring is visible on the left side. The image is framed by a white geometric border on the right and bottom. A semi-transparent white rectangle is centered over the image, containing the word "Background" in a large, black, sans-serif font.

Background

Early Work

- Age 15
- Songwriting
- Performing
- Recording
- Honest Lyrics



The Critic

- Guarded Writing
- Critical
- Stifled



Back to the Studio

- First pro studio experience
- Full band
- Learning process
 - Lost voice



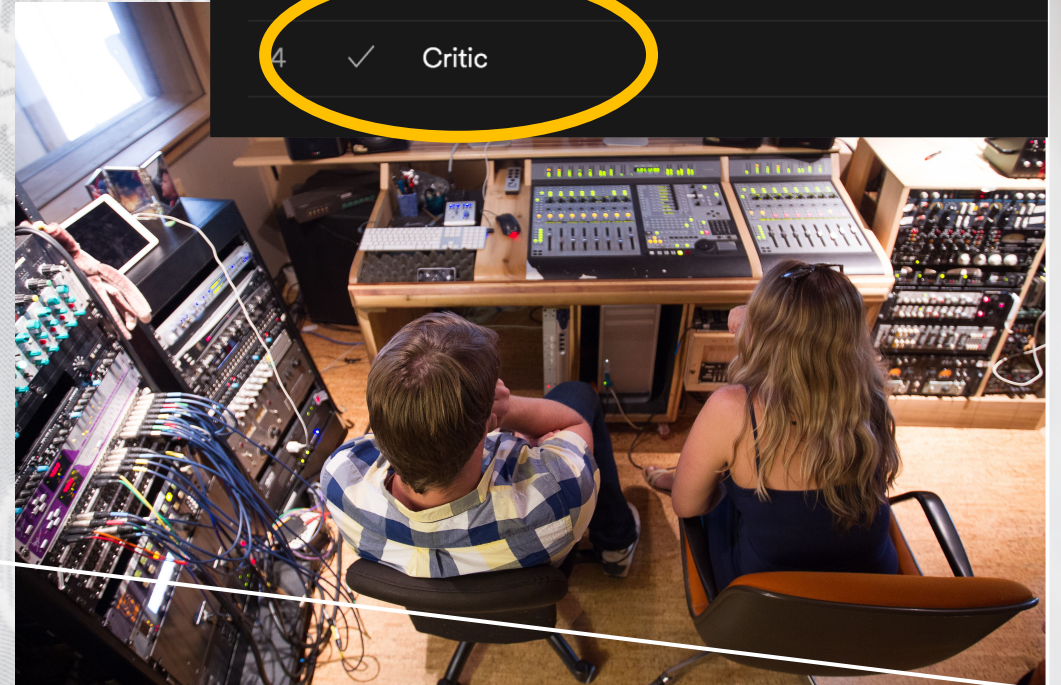
2016

My Old Habits

SAVED

...

#		TITLE
1	✓	My Old Habits
2	✓	Two-Man Con
3	✓	Silly
4	✓	Critic



Reflection

- Reflect on these experiences
- Create a project with autonomy that is true to my artist identity
- Reconnect with authentic, vulnerable writing style

Culminating Experience

“My goal with this CE is to create a body of work that would help establish myself as a strong, versatile, and authentic singer-songwriter”



Sub-Objectives

- Write, arrange and produce a 5-song EP
- Lyrically and vocally driven

Explore the role of vulnerability in songwriting and how this can strengthen a song's ability to connect with listeners.

Overview

- Songwriting Development
- Artist Inspiration for the EP
- My EP!
- Song Breakdown



Songwriting Development

- Lyric Writing Class
- Workshops
 - Robert Kraft
 - Billie Seidman
- International Writer's Camp (Netherlands)
- Readings



Lyric Writing: Take-Aways

- Lyrics first
- Object writing



Workshops: Take-Aways

“When you release a song it’s no longer yours”

- Robert Kraft

“Vulnerability is a songwriter’s greatest strength”

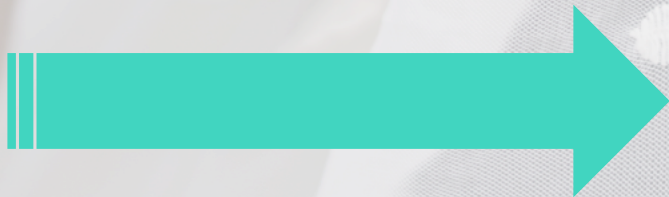
- Billy Seidman

“Don’t bore us, get to the chorus”

- IWC

Reading: Take-Aways

- Songwriter's Survival Guide
- The Artist's Way



- Free-writing // morning pages
- Cultivate creative space

Vulnerability // Connection

The Power Of Vulnerability – Brene Brown, PhD

“In order for connection to happen, we have to be seen”

- Connected “Whole Hearted” group
 - Fully embraced vulnerability
 - Courage =
 - to tell your story
with your whole heart



Artist Inspiration



Stranger in the Alps, Phoebe Bridgers



What Inspires Me

Lyrics

- Vulnerable
- Understated // Effortless
- Emotive



What Inspires Me

Production

- Instrumentation
- Mix
- Vocals
- Atmospheric



There is Also Risk



Themes

Follows a love story through
many stages in a vulnerable and
honest way

Themes

- Safety
- Security
- Being Guarded



- Vulnerability
- Risk
- Unknown



The Songs

1. Time to Waste – *new love*

2. Garden – *tend to the ones you love*

3. Puzzle – *scattered pieces of a heart*

4. Sinking – *to hold on or let sink*

5. Tin Woman – *love is risk*

A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white V-neck t-shirt and black pants, stands amidst a vast field of blooming red and pink roses. The roses are in full bloom, creating a dense carpet of color. In the background, a city skyline with several multi-story apartment buildings and palm trees is visible under a soft, hazy sky. The entire scene is framed by a white geometric border that resembles a stylized 'Z' or a series of connected lines.

Making “Garden”

Garden: Songwriting

- Music & lyrics together
- Emotionally driven – one sitting
- Meaning – love // garden



Garden: In the Studio

Goals & Highlights

- Acoustic // Subtle Electronics
- E Guitar with Ebow
- Bigsky Reverb Pedal

Challenges & Changes

- Drums



Garden: Final Version



Chorus:

And I'll wait as long as I can
But I cannot wait longer.
'Cause I won't last too long
Without the sun,
Too long without water.

Bridge:

When the winter comes
I'll bet you'll want
Someone to tend to
When the fruit of summer's
gone.

A close-up photograph of a person's foot stepping onto a wet, patterned surface, likely a piece of fabric or a rug. The foot is positioned in the upper left, and a splash of water is visible around the heel. The surface is dark with a light-colored, intricate floral or leaf pattern. The overall tone is muted and artistic. A white geometric line, resembling a stylized arrow or a corner bracket, points from the top right towards the bottom right of the frame.

Making “Puzzle”

Puzzle: Songwriting

- Lyric Writing Class
- Co-Write:
 - Erynn McLeod
 - Celestine Manno
- Lyric-first
- Meaning - scattered



Puzzle: In the Studio

Focus

- Stacked vocals

Challenges and Changes

- Drum groove too static
- Changed guitar groove in verse



Puzzle: Final Version



Verse 1:

One piece is in the mountains
And another by the shore.
My love in Colorado
Tucks one in his drawer.

Mom keeps hers in the kitchen
By my father's recipes.
All these things I love
Hold the scattered parts of me.

Chorus:

I started from the outside
And I'm working my way in.
My edges are complete
But my center is spread thin.
I want to be whole-hearted
So I have all my love to give.
But I can't finish the puzzle
When the pieces are adrift.

Making “Tin Woman”



Tin Woman: Songwriting

- Verse-Refrain
- Meaning - Guarded
- Most Difficult to Finish
- Biggest Challenge:
 - Rhyme Scheme



Tin Woman: Songwriting

"I'm the Tin Woman, baby, won't be broken"

Broken

thick skin

risk

distance

fist

hit

ends

big

missin'

ignorance

it

Tin Woman: Songwriting

*“Deep in my chest was a love so big
I don’t know, I don’t know what became of it
But where there’s love there is also risk
I’m the tin woman, baby, won’t be broken”*

Tin Woman: In the Studio

- Vocal focused
 - Doubled melody
- Drums – march/metallic
- Fiddle – fluid
- Post production





Tin Woman: Final Version



Verse 2:

I could seek blissful ignorance
But I'll brace for the blow, I know
how that ends.
So I'll keep you at an arms distance
I'm the Tin Woman, baby,
Won't be broken.

Chorus:

By spell or curse I fell headfirst
No, I never fell farther.
But nothing hurts quite like
Hitting the earth
Without any armor.
I was a fool, I was soft,
Now I'm harder.

Conclusion

- 5-song EP
- Songwriting development
- Production inspiration
- Instrumentation
- Vulnerability is (a) key!!



THANK YOU!

