



Park and Stone LOWE, top STYLIST'S STUDIO

Rachel Rose – How's your day been?

Soo Joo Park – I woke up really early because I'm a little jet-lagged and I had a flurry of emails – fires to put out. I played around on the keyboard for a little bit – I'm teaching myself how to play the piano again, without any guidance. I learned classical piano when I was young. I find it really fun to just tinker around with sounds, and I just record stuff on Voice Notes. I drank way too much coffee, walked my friend's dog around the reservoir, went to lunch, unpacked all my stuff, and now I'm talking to you.

RR – Are you an autodidact?

SJP – I taught myself how to use Photoshop, and I guess I'm a self-taught vocalist. I've had a few vocal lessons recently, like right before the December Chanel performance. I like learning things on my own. It can be really frustrating, and it's a little bit hard to get started, but I like doing things at my own pace, and I like discovering my own methods.

RR – What were you thinking about before you began making music?

SJP – I grew up singing in choir and going to church on Sundays with my family. My mom was in the church choir, and she would come home humming, so I would harmonize with her while she was doing the dishes. Very domestic. My parents had some CDs of music from the 60s and 70s. One of them was a compilation of The Mamas & The Papas, and I remember listening to certain tracks – "Dream a Little Dream of Me" and "Midnight Voyage" on repeat. In my teen years I started developing interest in the arts and wanting to be a participant in it. I started becoming extremely hungry for knowledge, regardless of genres or styles. After I graduated college, I had a full-time job in San Francisco doing graphic design, and then I started modeling. At first, modeling was quite slow, so I filled my whole day with watching movies and listening to music. I got really into shoegaze and witch house, which I think encapsulates the soft yet sinister, raw feelings I had at that moment. Then I watched *Mulholland Drive*. I was clutching seeing Rebekah Del Rio's performance of Roy Orbison's "Crying," in Spanish. It was so entrancing. It was around then I thought, maybe I want to try to put some of my emotions into making tracks and singing.

RR – I found when I was listening to some of the tracks on your album, that your voice feels like it is gliding on water. It's floating right above, and sometimes will duck down and submerge into sound and then come back up. It feels like the water is the electronics. I was thinking about how much that movement feels like you, or how much that movement feels like you're channeling something else. Is it a part of yourself that you don't otherwise get to touch or see?

SJP – I reference water a lot, actually. Getting my start in the choir, I've always wanted to use my voice as an element of an ensemble. Obviously, I metaphorize nature in my lyrics as well, and a lot of things I write about are purely personal. But at the end of the day, what really carries me is melodic harmony and how things make you feel.

RR – There are these moments where it feels like it shifts into banger energy, and then feels totally calm. Are you interested in dance music at all? How does this ethereal, natural, choral aspect of what you're doing also push up against pop or dance?

SJP – I've always loved the idea of opposites cooling each other off. So, just because something glides or sounds very airy, it doesn't mean it can't have that intensity. I love the push and pull. I like to surprise people, fuck up, and find happy accidents. I find those moments a lot more exciting than when things are what you expect.

RR – So, when you are writing, if your voice is functioning as an instrument,

"THE PERSONA I TAKE ON AS A MODEL CAN BE TRANSMUTABLE TO MY PERSONA ON STAGE."

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