UNDERSCORES SHINES AGAIN ON THIRD ALBUM

by Sean Aitken
CONTRIBUTOR
HE/HIM/HIS
sean.aitken@uconn.edu

On Friday, Mar. 20 the solo artist Underscores released her junior LP titled "U," which is her first release since "Wallsocket" from 2023.

Underscores, also known as April Harper Gray, is a prominent hyperpop artist. She gained popularity in the underground scene under her stage name throughout the 2020s. Last year was a big one for Underscores, as she graced the cover of the British music magazine "New Musical Express," performed at Coachella and scored multiple features on the rapper Danny Brown's album.

The first single released was "Music," which is also the second track on the album. "Music" excellently blends elements from trap and pop. The verses of the song are straight hip-hop with an ethereal drop into the chorus. The bridge is synth-filled and leads to a wonderful breakdown. Who would have thought a song called "Music" would blend genres together so well. It's just a great song that's a great love letter to all sorts of music.

The second single released was "Do It," which would go on to be the seventh track on the album. From the start when that bass comes in, you know you are in for a ride. This track is a banger all the way through. It is something to dance or headbang to and features an absolute ear worm of a chorus. "Do It" is my favorite track on the album and really should've gotten some traction on radio or social media.

The final single "Tell Me (U Want It)" is also the opener of the record. A great opening track is a perfect way to kick-start the ride of this album. The production is crisp; vocal effects are glitchy and keep it from getting boring and predicable. I think the highlight of the song is the bridge — the way it flows works so well, and it is a great way to again keep the listener on their toes. The song end withs another great breakdown.

Our first non-single track is "Hollywood Forever." Immediately it's clear that it's more laid-back than the singles. This track continues the trend of the bass hitting and being danceable. The beat drop around the middle of the song feels like it could be from the mid-2010s but well-produced and with great synths.

Following "Hollywood Forever" is "The Peace." It is one of the weaker tracks on the album. I still believe it is a good song, but it does not match up with some of the best on the album. "The Peace" has great production and good flow, my only issue is that the chorus is not as sticky as the other tracks, but it's still not bad by any means.

Track five "Innuendo (I Get U)" basically serves as the title track and it's a fun one. The track focuses on attraction to someone while they want to keep the relationship more casual; the song serves as innuendo. The catchy chorus and a killer beat make this song shine.

"Lovefield" is a pretty pop track. The instrumental of the track is very loopy, with a chorus that builds when it comes around the second time. When the final rendition of the chorus comes around, it becomes anthemic.

Two of the weaker tracks on the album are "Do It" and "Bodyfeeling." "Bodyfeeling" is not a bad song; it's just the most uninteresting on the album. It does not feel like an Underscores song. It's a simple pop song that would stand out on a less colorful album; it feels like anyone could've made this song.

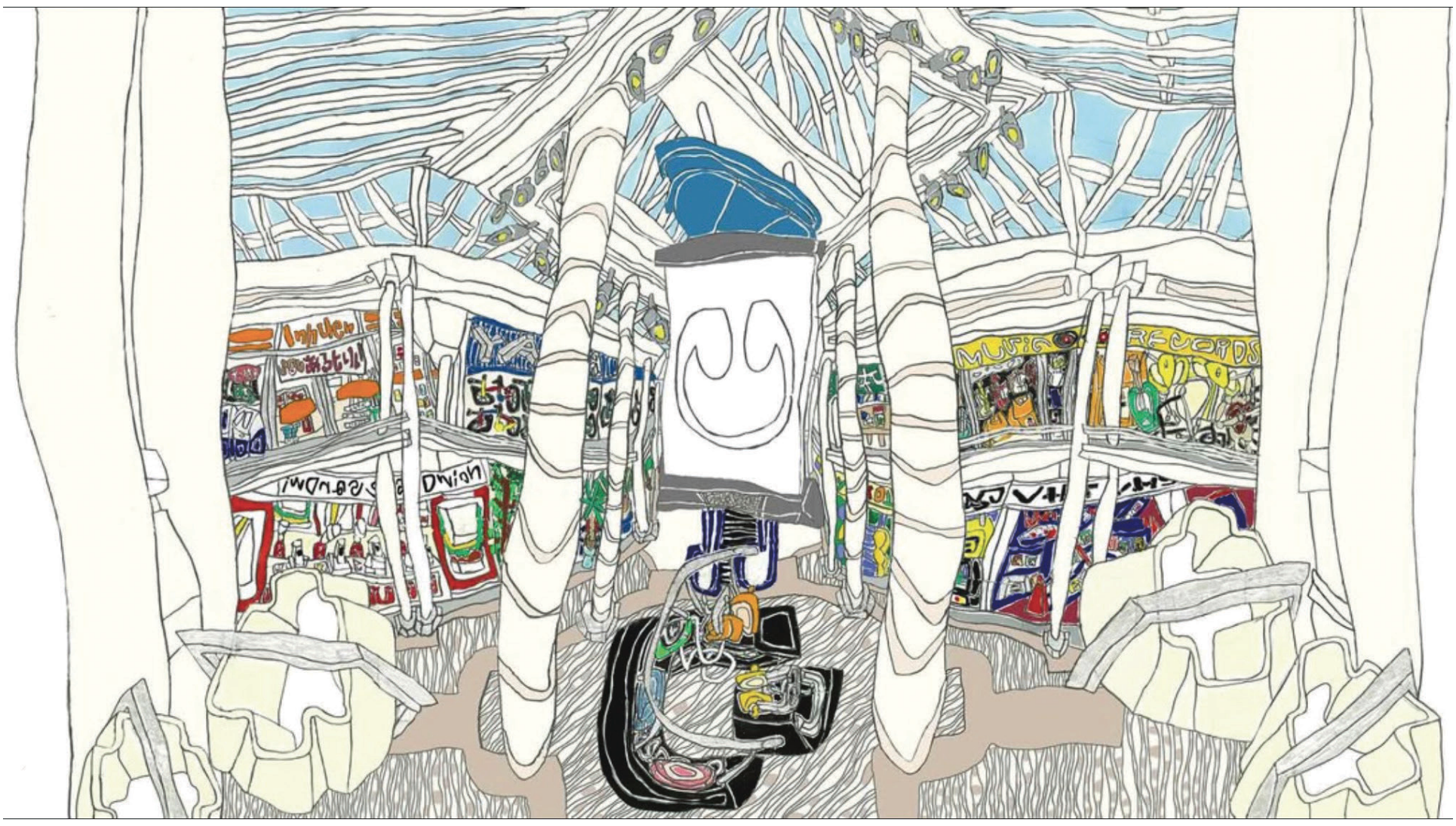
The closing track "Wish U Well" ends the album on a solid note. A song about saying goodbye to a past relationship after seeing that person has moved on, while wishing the former partner well as the title implies. Very vivid storytelling is present on this track. The production on this album is stellar and continues with this song. It has great verses with a mix of falsetto and chest vocals and a chorus that's sure to get stuck in your head in a good way.

"U" by Underscores is a great album, it's super well-produced and really shines in its bridges. It is an excellent addition to the hyperpop genre and Underscores' discography.

4/5



Underscores, also known as April Harper Gray, posing in an elevator. Underscores recently released new music for the first time since her 2023 "Wallsocket" album release. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UNDERSCORES ON INSTAGRAM.



The cover art for musical artist Underscores' LP "U." "U" was released on Friday, March 20. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UNDERSCORES ON INSTAGRAM.