BRAKENCE IS BACK AFTER FOUR YEARS WITH “marroW”

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Ohio-native hyperpop artist Brakence released his third album Friday, Oct 23. Randy Findell who goes by the stage name Brakence is back with his first album in four years, “marroW.”

2022’s “hypochondriac” put Brakence on the map for many, including me, as a solid album with strong highlights. There was a quick turnaround between the announcement and release date of “marroW”; the first single “ready or noT” dropped less than a month before the LP’s release. Then a total of six singles were put out before its official release.

Does Brakence build on what we heard on “hypochondriac?” Let’s dig in.

The opening track “madeleine” establishes the sound of the record. Glitchy beats cover the track with Brakence dramatically crooning over the instrumental. His calls for Madeleine are moody and fill the track with character.

Next is “death rolL.”. A breakneck track with some muddy production. The glitchiness continues, but this track is heavier. Brakence’s vocals are not the flashiest, but he deliverers on his falsetto. The changing pre chorus keeps the song fresh, and then the distorted outro caps off the song perfectly. A great song with an Iron Gwazi reference — how could you not love that?

Few songs on the album fit into a groovy, almost Mk.gee-like guitar-based area. “Problem Child,” “wishing well” and “crystallized” all have this sound. It’s a great one for Brakence. He shines on more quick and loud tracks, so these hover around that sound without being too abrasive.

“Problem Child” has some airy synths that offer contrast to the album so far. It’s a track about the consequences of ecological distortion with the “Mother” in the song referring to mother nature. A good bridge and some of his best vocals make this one a highlight.

Then, “wishing well” builds on all that momentum. Falsetto vocals are great on this track with some odd vocal inflections that work well. His vocal delivery makes some of these songs. Not on this track, but a lot of instrumentals on the album are just walls of noise that don’t do much.

“Crystallized” is a track that just drips style. Brakence takes control of this one and delivers a great track.

Now getting deeper into the album, we get a handful of alright tracks, like “guesswork” and “jesteR,” which are serviceable tracks. The former suffers from some clunkiness in the verses. Then “jesteR” has strong drums, but the chorus is not great. The repeating lines of “Corrupting the kids, corrupting the kids” become grating by the end of the song.

The lead single “ready or noT” represents the album well. The first half is in your face, trying to rip your head off with a wave of glitchy beats. Then the second half brings in more sounds reminiscent to a track like the aforementioned “Problem Child.” “Ready or noT” is a great song that grew on me.

A subtle transition takes us to “body.” This track is more laid back with a sticky chorus. The vocals and instrumental sync up nicely.

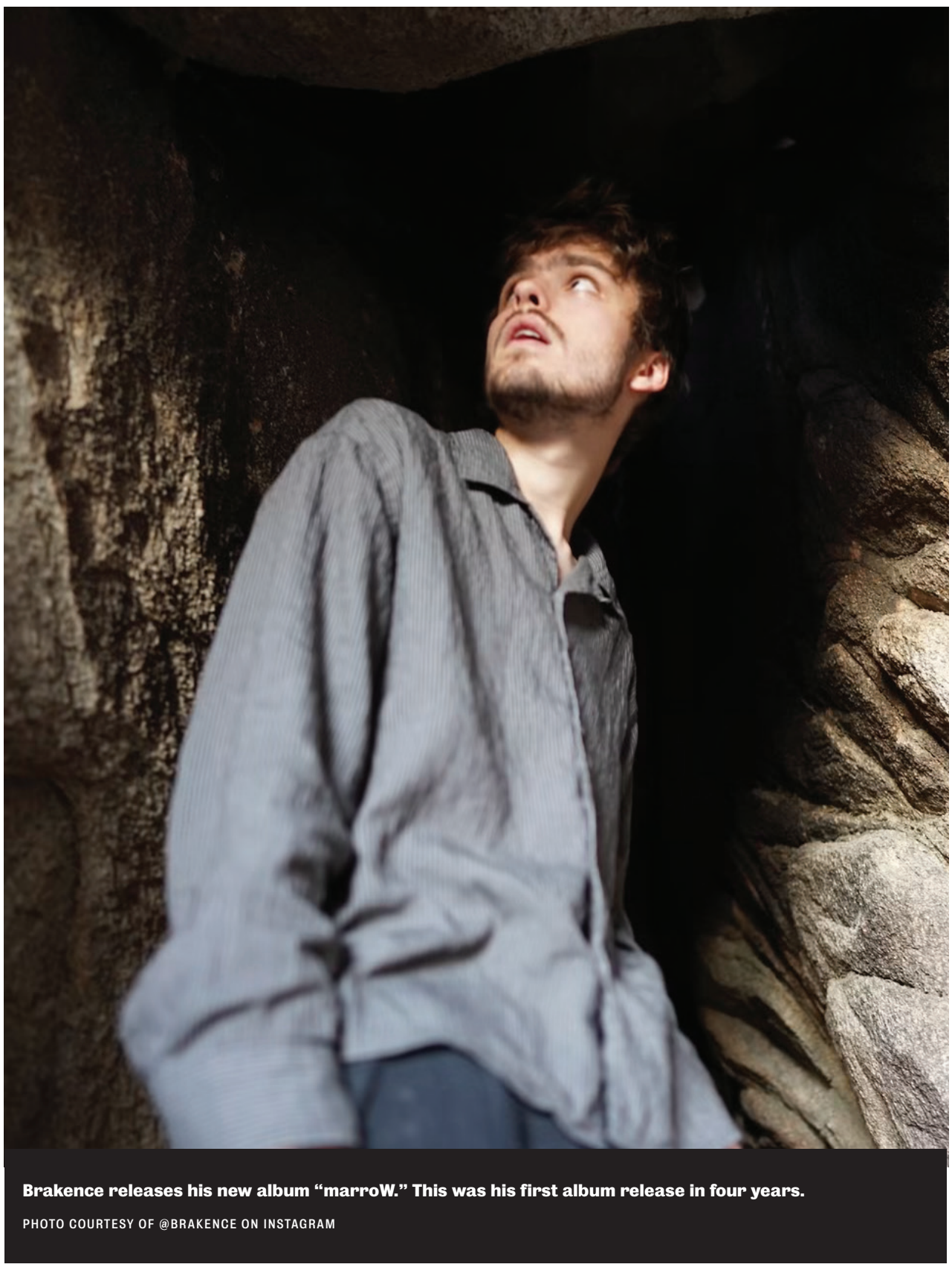
“SinkflY” begins soft and explodes into some metal-inspired heavy guitars. “BitE” follows that theme, but not the entire time. Booming drums, combined with distorted guitar riffs and Brakence’s bright delivery allow hard rock to take full effect on this track.

The second half of the album has some more low-key tracks. “Traitor’ and “heart” are slow piano ballads that are not bad; Brakence just excels in quicker tracks.

“With Or Without it” is a great closer. It focuses on his struggle of his identity combined with his artistry.

“MarroW” is a good showing from Brakence. There are a lot of good to great tracks on this album. The only downside is the album’s length. At over an hour long the album could use a bit of cutting down.

Rating: 3.75/5



Brakence releases his new album “marroW.” This was his first album release in four years.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @BRAKENCE ON INSTAGRAM



COMIC BY SETH WALLEN, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



The album cover for Brakence’s new album “marroW.” The album released on Oct. 23.

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